

T H E
W O R K S

Of the REVEREND and PIOUS

Mr. *WILLIAM DYER*,

Late Preacher of the Gospel at Clondbury.

C O N T A I N I N G,

- | | |
|---|---|
| I. CHRIST's Famous
TITLES. | V. A CALL to SINNERS!
Or CHRIST's VOICE
to LONDON. |
| II. A BELIEVER's
GOLDEN CHAIN. | VI. The Great Day of
GOD's WRATH. |
| III. A CABINET of JEW
ELS: Or, a GLIMPSE
of SION's GLORY. | VII. The great Necessi-
ty of WATCHING and
PRAYING. |
| IV. A TREATISE con-
cerning Following the
MB. | VIII. A small TREATISE
ON DEATH. |

iii. 8. *Unto me, who am less than the least of
saints, is this grace given, that I should preach
among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ.*

G L A S G O W:
Printed by JOHN ROBERTSON.
M, DCC, LXXI.

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T H E

EPISTLE DEDICATORY.

*To all my loving Friends, into whose hands these
shall come, greeting.*

MY dearest friends, whom I love dearly, remember daily, long for greatly, pray for earnestly, and praise God heartily, to whom I could write with my purest blood, and do send these lines with my very inward bowels.

Though I cannot say I am so transported with affection and zeal, as Paul, to wish myself accursed from Christ for your sakes; yet I am persuaded, I could be content with Jonas, to be cast into the sea, for the pacifying of God's wrath for you; that I may be free from the blood of all men, I am resolved in the strength and by the power of God, to deal plainly, and I hope sincerely with all men, not valuing the smiles, nor fearing the frowns of wicked men, it is better to lose the smiles of men, than it is to lose the souls of men; though there be many that be enemies to me, yet I am enemy to none, a hater of no man's person, but a lover of every man's soul. He that loved me when I was an enemy. commandeth me to love my enemies. Dear Christians, cleave to the Lord, and follow after the Lord fully. Neglect no duty, though you know there is danger in doing: Fear God and sin, more than men and suffering, let your souls bear up with Christ, bear off from the world, bear down your corruption, and bear forth your testimony; respect all, reject none of God's commandments; take patiently and thankfully the hardest dealings of God.

The heaviest afflictions on earth are but light in comparison of Christ's sufferings, or the punishment

of the wicked in hell. When God's people are humble enough, and the wicked high enough, and the Lord's appointed time come, then expect deliverance to the godly, and not before. You shall not envy the patience of God towards your enemies, for it is nothing in comparison of what love he sheweth to you: Be you diligent at your work, and leave God at his work: You need not fear success; the Lord would soon turn from his wrath if men were turned from their wickedness; look narrowly into your hearts, tongues, and ways; I never trusted God, but I found him faithful: nor mine own heart, but I found it false. Take heed friends, that you be not always wooing Christ, and yet never married to him: Therefore never leave till you have put the great question out of question.

Look upon Christ, first without you, and then search for Christ within you: he that will clearly see with the eye of faith, must shut the eye of reason. It is the will of God, that saints shall rejoice more in what Christ hath done for them, than what they have done for Christ.

Oh, lay up, and lay out for Christ; make haste and do your work, and God will make haste and give you your wages.

Dear Sirs, I beseech you with beseeching, consider well of these things; for they are precious truths, weighty truths, and necessary truths.

I shall add no more, but promise you my prayers, and do request your prayers for me, and for a blessing upon this, that it may bring glory to God, and good to you, which is all that is aimed at by him who is,

Your Soul's Servant,

WILLIAM DYER

TO THE CHRISTIAN READER.

Courteous Reader,

IT is the great unhappiness of our age, that the greatest part of men busy themselves most in that which concerns them least. Look into the world among rich and poor, high and low, young and old, and see whether it appear not by the whole scope of their conversations, that they set more by something else than Christ and salvation? So they may have but some of the earth in their hands, they care for nothing of heaven in their hearts, though gold can no more fill their hearts, than grass their purses.

Most men are like that silly woman, that when her house was on fire, so minded the saving of her goods, that she left her child roasting in the flame: At last being put in remembrance of it, she cries out, Oh, my child, my child! Oh! how many men are there that drop into perdition, merely for a little wealth?

There are many that are temporally miserable, that are eternally happy; And there are many that are temporally happy, that shall be eternally miserable. Oh! there is a great vanity in all worldly excellencies: The earth is big in our hope, but little in our hands; it cannot satisfy the sense of men, much less can it satisfy the souls of men.

Dear children, according to my talent received, I have endeavoured to set forth the riches, the loveliness, the preciousness, and excellencies

cellencies which are in Christ, to draw the heart after him, and to be sick of love for him. Oh! Jesus Christ is a fountain of life, light, love, grace, glory, comfort, joy, goodness, always full and flowing, yea, overflowing; Paul was so much taken with Christ, that he was ever in his thoughts, always near his heart, and upon his tongue: He names him six or seven times in one Chapter, 1 Cor. i. O that our hearts and thoughts were thus busied about Christ, and taken up with Christ, and these treasures of wisdom and knowledge that are in him.

The design of this piece is not the ostentation of the Author, but the edification of the Reader: tho' the Author be contemptible, yet the matter is comfortable. I hope none will blow out such a candle upon earth, by the light of which themselves may see the way to heaven. If God had given in more of himself to me, I should have given more out to thee; but God looks not for what he gives not. If God may have glory, and the Church edification by these labours of mine, I shall have my end. Now the good Lord bring thy heart more and more in love with Christ, who is altogether lovely, that shortly thou mayest enjoy endless felicity in his bosom.

This shall be the prayer for thee, of him that is,

Thy Servant in CHRIST,

WILLIAM DYER.

THE

DESIRE OF ALL NATIONS.

CANT. v. the last verse, He is altogether lovely.

OUT of the Lion of the tribe of Judah, comes better and sweeter honey, than out of Samson's lion; that is the sweetest honey which we suck out of Christ's hive: For the face of none is so comely in a saint's eye, as the face of Christ; and the voice of none is so pleasant in a saint's ear, as the voice of Christ. O Christian, the God whom thou serveest is so excellent, that no good can be added to him; and so infinite, that no good can be diminished in him. He makes happy and yet is not the less happy: He shews mercy to the full, and yet remains full of mercy. O come, eat and drink abundantly! O beloved, there is no fear of excess here, though one drop of Christ be sweet, yet the deeper the sweeter.

The wine that Christ draws, is the best wine that a Christian drinks: This whole book of Canticles is bespangled with the praises of Jesus Christ: The subject matter of this book, is a declaration of the mutual intercourse of love and affection between Christ and his church, what spiritual entertainment is given on both sides, with the sweet content they have in each other's beauty. Here you may see the king in his glory, the spouse in her beauty: here you may see Christ giving her sweet promises, adorning her with sundry excellencies: communicating his love, and commending her graces: here you may also see the church even ravished with the consideration and contemplation of Christ's love and beauty. His beauty is taking; his love is ravishing, his voice is pleasing, his goodness drawing, his manifestations are enticing. He is the beloved Son, and the Son of love; He is nothing but love to those that are his love.

But I shall no longer entertain you with a crumb at the door, but carry you to the Chapter out of which my text is taken, and so lead you to the cabinet where the jewel lieth.

Brethren and beloved, you have a gracious description of Jesus Christ in this chapter, and that from ver. 10, to 16. where the spouse is setting forth the riches, the dignity, the excellency, the beauty, the majesty, the glory, the preciousness and loveliness of Jesus Christ, "He is white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand. His head is as the most fine gold, his locks are bushy and black as a raven. His eyes are as the eyes of doves by the rivers of waters, washed with milk, and fitly set, his cheeks are as a bed of spices, as sweet flowers: His lips like lilies, dropping sweet smelling myrrh, his hands are as gold rings set with the beryl: His belly is as bright ivory overlaid with sapphires: His legs are as pillars of marble, set upon sockets of fine gold: His countenance is as Lebanon, excellent as the cedars." And thus she sets forth her beloved, and at last winds up all with this rare expression, 'He is altogether lovely.'

This text is a sacred cabinet, which contains in it,
First, The Jewel Christ, in this word, He,
2dly, The price of this jewel, Altogether lovely.

The observation or doctrine is this. That Jesus Christ is infinitely and superlatively lovely. He is the most amazing and delightful object. The very name of Jesus Christ is as precious ointment poured forth. It is said, that the letters of his name were found graven upon Ignatius's heart. Jesus Christ is in every believer's heart, and nothing can do better there; for he is altogether lovely. That Jesus Christ is thus transcendently lovely, will appear four manner of ways;

First, By Titles.

Secondly, By Types.

Thirdly, By Resemblances.

Fourthly, By Demonstrations.

I shall speak only to the first of these. Our Lord Jesus hath seven famous and lovely titles, which are as so many jewels in his crown. First,

First, The desire of all nations.

Secondly, King of kings.

Thirdly, The Mighty God.

Fourthly, The Everlasting Father.

Fifthly, The Prince of Peace.

Sixthly, The Elest precious.

Seventhly, Wonderful.

We will begin with the first of these famous titles, to wit, The desire of all nations. This title you have in the second of Haggai and 7th verse; 'And the desire of all nations shall come.' But you will say, how is Christ the desire of all nations? Do not all the nations abhor him, and say, We will not have this man to rule over us? 'The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against his anointed.' Psalm ii. 2. The kings of the earth are afraid, lest Christ's government should unking them, the rulers are jealous, lest it will dispossess them from their dignities; even the reformers that have adventured all to set it up, are jealous lest it will encroach upon their power and privileges; kings are afraid of it, and think themselves but half kings, where Christ doth set up his word and discipline, lawyers are afraid of it, lest it should take away their gain, and the laws of Christ should over-top the laws of the land. The people are afraid of it, lest it should compel them to subjection to the law and way which their souls abhor. Oh, how long hath the world rebelled against Jesus Christ, and his government.

But tell me, have the people gained any thing by resisting Christ, his gospel and government, by hating his servants, and by scorning his holy ways? Or doth it make the crown sit faster on the heads of kings? I will leave you to judge of this.

But beloved, for all this, JESUS CHRIST is the desire of all nations.

And that I shall shew in five particulars.

Tho' Jesus Christ be not actively desired by all nations, yet he is rightly stiled, The desire of all nations.

First, Because he is most desireable in himself, and all things that are desireable are in him. Beauty is in Christ, bounty is in Christ, riches and honour are in Christ, Prov. viii. 18.

Jesus Christ is the treasure hid in the gospol, the pearl of great price: He is the Sun in the firmament of the scripture, whom to know is everlasting life: He is a Spring full of the water of life, and hive of sweetness, a magazine of riches, a river of pleasures, wherein you may bath your souls to all eternity.

O he is fulness and sweetness, 'The chiefest among ten thousand,' Cant. v. 10. 'He is more precious than rubies; and all the things thou canst desire, are not to be compared to him, Prov. iii. 15.

Alas! What are all the crowns and kingdoms of the world, all the thrones and sceptres of kings to Christ? I say, What are the treasures of the east, the gold of the west, the spices of the south, and the pearls of the north to him? This, or whatsoever thou dost imagine, are not to be compared unto the blessed Jesus. Beloved, the glories and excellencies of Christ excel all others. As all waters meet in the sea, and as all the lights meet in the sun, so all the perfections and excellencies of all the saints and angels meet in Christ. Nay first, Christ hath not only the holiness of angels, the loveliness of saints, and the treasure of heaven, but also the fulness of the Godhead, the riches of the Deity are in him, Col. i. 9. 'For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell,' fulness of grace, fulness of knowlege, fulness of love, fulness of glory. He is lovely to the Father, lovely to the angels, lovely to the saints, and lovely to the soul, and therefore he may well be called the desire of all nations, for all desireable things are in him.

Secondly, Jesus Christ is called the desire of all nations, because his desire is after all nations, tho' he hath no need of them; he hath thousands of angels before him, and ten thousand daily to minister unto him, yet such infinite love doth he bear to the sons of men,

men. in whom there is no loveliness, that he himself saith, ' my delight is with the sons of men, Prov. viii. 31. That our Lord Jesus hath a strong desire after the nations to cover them, and save the nations, will appear by three things.

1st, By what he did before he came into the world.

2dly, By what he did when he was in the world.

3dly, By what he doth now when he is out of the world.

First, Our Lord Jesus had a great desire after the poor nations, before he came into the world, or else he would never have left his crown, his royal court, his Father's bosom, his glorious robes, to come into this world to be spit upon by men, and to be murdered by men; nay, he did not only become a laughing-stock to men, but a gazing-stock to angels. Now beloved, do ye not think Jesus Christ had a great desire after the nations good, that he would leave all his glory, and greatness, and pomp, and riches, to come into this world, to be poor, to be hungry, to be weary, to be tempted, to be betrayed, to be sold?

But you may perhaps say, that Christ little thought his own country-men should have shed his blood, and that one of his own family would betray him.

Why beloved, do you think he did not know it? yea, he knew it before he came into the world, how he should be used in the world, that the Jews would crucify him, and that Judas would betray him, John vi. 46. ' He knew it from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him.' Christ knew it before he came from heaven, what coarse entertainment he should have upon earth. Now beloved, put all this together, and tell me, had not Jesus Christ a great desire after us, before he came to us, that he would uncrown himself, to crown us; and put off his robes, to put on our rags, and to come out of heaven, to keep us out of hell? He fasted forty days that he might feast us to all eternity. He came from heaven to earth, that he might send us from earth to heaven.

The Desire of all Nations.

The Son of God became the Son of man, that we the sons of men should become the sons of God; and all this he did to save the nations.

Secondly, He had a strong desire after the nations when he was in the world. O Christ would fain have saved the nations, and healed them, and enlightened them; therefore he sends forth his apostles, Matth. xxviii. 19. and bids them go and teach all nations: the people were in his eyes, and upon his heart; and so in Mat. xxiii. Christ sends forth his servants once, twice, thrice, as he would take no denial, but they would not come. Nay, beloved, our Lord Jesus Christ did not only send others to poor souls to beseech them, to intreat them to come in, to repent, and to believe in their Saviour, that their souls might be saved; but he went himself and desired them: nay, that is not all, beloved, he cried to them, and said, 'If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink,' John vii. 37.

O! How earnest was Jesus Christ with poor souls to come to him. 'Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest,' Mat. xi. 26. So in Luke xiv. 23. 'Go to the high ways and compel them to come in, that my house may be full.'

Do you see this Christians, what vehement desires Jesus Christ had after the nations and souls of men, that he might ever make them happy when he was in the world, and he hath the same desire still. How oft would Jesus Christ have healed the Jews, that poor nation, as he himself speaketh in Matth. xxiii. 27. 'How often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen gathereth her young ones, and ye would not?' Nay, when he had done all this, he doth not leave them, but weeps over them: his eyes were wet, because their eyes were dry. So this is clear from what Christ did when he was in the world, that he desired much the healing and converting of nations.

First, In his bearing with them.

Secondly, In his proffers unto them.

Thirdly, He hath a great desire after the nations, for he is out of the world, though he be gone to heaven,

heaven, and entered into glory ; and there sitteth at the right-hand of the Father, yet I say, his desires, are as much after poor souls, as ever. This will appear by two things.

First, In his forbearance and long sufferance.

O! how long hath Christ born with the sinful nations, and yet he bears with them still, notwithstanding they have broke his laws, and despised the gospel, and contemned his ordinances, and shed his saints blood, grieved his Spirit, and abused his mercies. Thus and much more they have done, and yet he spared them, that he might be gracious to them, Isa. xxx. 18. ' And therefore will the Lord wait, that he may be gracious to you.'

Therefore will he be exalted, that he may shew mercy.

Now, beloved, do you think that Jesus Christ would take all this at the nations hands, but that he is unwilling to destroy them, and most willing to save them.

Secondly, His love appears, not only by his bearing with them, but by his proffers to them.

O beloved, how doth God stand day after day, month after month, and year after year, proffering himself, his Son, his mercy, his love, his grace, and his glory to poor souls.

Many have the space of repentance, who have not the grace of repentance.

Now, my brethren, by these things you may see, that Jesus Christ hath a great desire after the nations.

Thirdly, Jesus Christ is called, The desire of all nations, because it is he only that can make any person or family, or nation truly desirable.

Oh, beloved, what is the reason that the Lord of hosts prefers his people before all the sons of men ? The Lord prefers his little remnant before all the world besides, Exod. xix. 5. ' You shall be a peculiar treasure unto me, above all people : the righteous is more excellent than his neighbour.' Prov. xii. 26. Tho' his neighbour be a prince, a king, or emperor,

or a pope, yet if he be more righteous, he is more excellent than he; they are but base born. Believers be these worthies, 'Of whom the world was not worthy,' Heb. xiii. 35. 'Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people,' 1 Pet. ii. 6. Believers are not only diligent Christians, but excellent Christians.

Now, what is the reason, beloved, that the saints are thus excellent above all others? Is it for their birth, breeding or learning, or riches, or greatness, or honour? No, no it is for none of these; but if you would know the reason, it is, because Christ is formed in them and married to them; They have the new name, the new nature, the new heart, the new spirit, Oh, this is the reason, if there were any thing besides Christ, that could make any nation, or family, or person truly desirable, it must be either birth, or greatness, or learning, or riches, beauty, or wisdom, or strength; now all these do not make any one desirable; for if they did, then those that sit upon the nations would be the most desirable persons under heaven, because they have the most of these. But for this see, Dan. iv. 17. 'And setteth up over it the basest of men,' Rev. xvii. 15 The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are people and multitudes, and nations, and tongues: So that none of these can do it but Christ only, Rev. v. 10.

He hath made us unto our God kings and priests, O! Christ hath made every believer a king; it is Christ's beauty that makes us beautiful; it is his riches that makes us rich, it is his righteousness that makes us righteous; he only makes us truly honourable and desirable. Well may Christ be called, 'The desire of all nations:' it is he that can make a nation desirable.

Fourthly, Jesus Christ is called, The desire of all nations, because all nations stand in need of him; Nay not only all nations, but all persons, young and old, rich and poor, high and low. He that will be saved, must have a Saviour to save him, or else he

can never be saved. The apostle tells us, Acts iv. 12. 'Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.' And Christ saith, John xiv. 6. 'I am the way and the truth and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me:' So that not only all nations, but all persons, stand in need of him.

You may go to heaven without health, without wealth, without honour, without pleasures, without friends, without learning, but you can never go to heaven without Christ.

What will you do, if you begin to die naturally, before you begin to live spiritually?

If the tabernacle of nature be taken down, before the temple of grace be raised up: If your paradise be laid waste before the tree of life be set up in it: If you give up the ghost, before ever you receive the holy Ghost: If the sun of your life be set within you, before the Sun of righteousness shine upon you: If the body be fit to be turned into the earth, before the soul be fit to be taken into heaven: If the second birth have no place in you, the second death shall have power over you.

Tho' the nations need nothing more than Christ, yet they slight nothing more than Christ.

Tell me, how will you live when you die, that are dead whilst you live?

O beloved, is it not sad that the nations should refuse Christ, his gospel and government as they do?

Indeed if men might be their own judges, then Christ hath no enemies, we are all his friends.

If the Jews might so have been their own judges, it was not the Son of God whom they crucified, but an enemy to Cesar. It was not Paul a saint they persecuted, but one that they found to be a pestilent fellow: So men will say now, they do not persecute the saints of God, but seditious fanatics: But God will shortly take off the vail of hypocrisy from their faces.

O grieve for them that cannot grieve for themselves.

And

And thus you see, that all nations stand in need of Christ, who is the desire of all nations.

Fifthly, Our Lord Jesus is called, The desire of all nations, because when he sets up himself in any one, as their desire, then they run after him, and count nothing too dear for him. So the church of God, Isa. xxvi. 8, 9, 'The desire of our souls is, to thy name. With my soul have I desired thee in the night; yea, with my spirit within me, will I seek thee early.'

Oh! when the desire of all nations once setteth up himself in the soul, then he becomes the desire of the soul.

When he hath thus endeared himself to their souls, they count nothing too dear for him, all shall be at his command: their gold, their silver, their strength, their lives, Rev. x. 11. 'They loved not their lives unto the death.' So that, beloved, let men be enemies to Jesus Christ, yet as soon as Christ sets up himself in their hearts, they will love him, own him, serve him, and suffer for him.

Now sirs, put all these together, and it will fully prove Christ to be the desire of all nations.

I shall but make short use of it, and so conclude.

Is it so that our Lord Jesus Christ is the desire of all nations, and that all things desireable are in him? Oh then, let me beg of you: Oh let me beseech you, for the Lord's sake, and for your souls' sake, make Christ Jesus the desire of your souls,

He is the desire of all nations, and shall he not be the desire of your souls? Whom will ye love, if not the King of saints? Whom will ye long for, if not for the desire of all nations? Whom will you prize, if not the Prince of peace? He is the Son of God, the second Person in the glorious Trinity, before whom angels and archangels, and all the hosts of heaven do bow before him. 'He is the glory of glories, the crown of crowns, the heaven of heavens, he is a light in darkness, joy in sadness, riches in poverty, life in death;' It is he that can resolve all your doubts, secure you in danger, save your souls, and

bring

bring you to glory, where all joy is enjoyed. O therefore, let all the glory of your glory be to give all glory, and yourselves to him. So much, or so little for this time.

The KING OF KINGS.

CANT. v. 16. He is altogether lovely.

The Doctrine. That Jesus Christ is infinitely and superlatively lovely.

I Now proceed to the second title, which is given to the Lord Jesus Christ and that is, King of kings, Augustine desired to have seen three things before he died, First, Rome in her glory and purity. Secondly, Paul in the pulpit preaching Thirdly, Christ in the flesh upon earth. Cato the heathen repented himself of three things, First, That ever he spent a day idle. Secondly, That ever he revealed his secrets to a woman, Thirdly, That ever he went by water, when he might have gone by land. Thales gave thanks for three things. First, That he was endued with reason, and was not a beast. Secondly, That he was a man and not a woman. Thirdly, That he was a Grecian and not a Barbarian. And I, poor I, desire to see three things before I die. First, Babylon's ruin. Secondly, Christ's reigning. Thirdly, Satan's binding. The angels hath sworn by him that lives for ever and ever, that time shall be no longer. Rev. x. 6. Who will not believe this sacred oath? Did he say it? No, he swore it. How? By himself? No, by him that lives for ever. What? That time must be a little? No, it must be no longer. That time shall be no longer. The Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come, saith the prophet in Mal. iii. 1. They who keep the word of God's patience, God will keep them in the hour of temptation.

Well, the second title of Jesus Christ, is, King of kings,

kings, I pray you take notice of it, it is now to be handled in Rev. xix. 16. 'He hath a name written, saith the text, King of kings, and Lord of lords.' Here is his title now, King of kings. Beloved, Jesus Christ is a threefold King.

First, His enemies King. Secondly, His saints King. Thirdly, His Father's King.

The First, He rules over. The Second, He rules in. The Third, He rules for.

I shall begin with the first, and take them in order.

First, Christ is his enemies King, that is, He is King over his enemies. Christ is a King above all kings, and over all kings; and therefore the scripture calls him King of kings, as you have it, 1 Tim. vi. 15. Christ is a King above all kings; for if he were not a King above all kings, he could not be a King over all kings. Now that he is a King above all kings, two scriptures prove it, Psalm lxxxix. 27. saith God the Father there, 'I will make my first born higher than the kings of the earth.' Now who is the first born? Why, It is Jesus Christ; as he is elsewhere called the First born of every creature. Now saith God, 'I will make my First-born higher than the kings of the earth, higher in glory, higher in power, higher in majesty. So in Rev. x. 5. there Christ is called, the Prince of the earth. Alas! alas! what are all the mighty men, the great, the honourable men of the earth, to Jesus Christ? They are but like a little bubble in the water, for if all the nations, in comparison to God, be but as a drop in the bucket, or the dust of the balance, as the prophet speaks in Isa. xl. 15. O how little then be the kings of the earth?

Nay, beloved, Christ Jesus is not only above the kings of the earth, and higher than kings, but he is higher than the angels; yea, he is the head of angels: and therefore all the angels in heaven are commanded to worship him. He is the head of all angels, Col. ii. 30. 'He is the head of all principalities and powers, which includes the angels.' And in Heb. i. 6. 'Let all the angels of God worship him.' God will

will have the angels worship Christ, as well as men. O! sirs, Christ is a King, before whom the angels veil their faces, and the kings of the earth do cast down their crowns.

Again, as he is a King above all kings, so he is a King over all kings too: Jesus Christ is an universal King. He is the King over all kingdoms, over all nations, over all governments, over all powers, over all people, Dan. vii. 14. 'There was given to him, saith the text, dominion and power, and glory, and a kingdom: that all people and nations and languages were to serve him. Now who was this? In the 13 verse, it is clearly meant of Jesus Christ. All people, and all nations, and languages, and kingdoms were to serve him; so that you see Christ is not only King of saints, but King of nations too, and therefore you find in Ps. ii. 8. it is a text often read, but little observed, 'Ask of me, saith the Father, and I will give the Heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.' The very Heathens are given to Christ, and the outmost parts of the earth for his possession.

As the Lord Jesus Christ hath all the kingdoms of the earth given to him; so likewise he hath all power given to him, or else what would he do with a kingdom, in Mat. xxviii. 18. 'All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.' Oh! sirs, here is a text that should revive the hearts of saints, 'All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth,' saith Christ to his Apostles. So that it is he that binds kings in chains, and princes in fetters of iron, as the last Psalm saving one speaks. He it is that suffers no man to do them wrong; yea, he reproves kings for their fakes, and breaks mighty kings in pieces for the saints sakes, Psal. cv. 13. And therefore it is he that overrules kings, and overcomes the kings of the earth, that makes war with the saints, in Rev. xvii. 14. The ten kings made war with the Lamb, but the Lamb prevailed; and why, because he was King of kings, and Lord of Lords. This is the first, Jesus Christ is
his

his enemies King, that is, He is a King among their kings, and over their kings.

Secondly, As Jesus Christ is his enemies King, so he is his saints King. I will give you two scriptures to prove it, tho' I need not, yet I will; because of making of things very clear, as I go on, in Rev. xv. 3. There Jesus Christ is called, The saints King, 'Thou King of saints.' So also in Mat. xxi. 5. 'Tell ye the daughter of Sion, Behold thy King cometh.' So that by these two scriptures, you see Jesus Christ is King of saints. Now beloved, I beseech you here to mind me: Jesus Christ, you see, is King of the bad, and of the good; but as for the wicked, he rules over them by his power and might: but the saints he rules in them by his Spirit and graces. Now to this the scripture witnesseth, that Jesus Christ rules in the saints, and is King of saints; and therefore it tells in Col. i. 17. 'Christ in you the hope of glory;' And elsewhere, 'Know ye not that Christ is in you except ye be reprobates,' mark here, Christ must be in you, Christ in you the hope of glory. So in Psal. xxiv. 7. 'Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up ye everlasting doors, that the King of glory may enter in.' Here Christ is called the King of glory: and the Psalmist calls upon men to open their hearts, that the King of glory may come in: so in Rev. iii. 20. 'Behold I stand at the door and knock, if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in and sup with him, and he with me.' O this is Christ's spiritual kingdom, and here he rules in the hearts of his people, here he rules over their consciences, over their wills, over their affections, over their judgments and understandings, and no body hath any thing to do here but Christ; it is Christ that rules over the consciences and judgments of men, and therefore he is called, The King of saints. It is true other kings may bear rule over the estates of men. But as for the soul, that only belongs to Christ, and therefore believers are said to be all glorious within. The king's daughter, which is the church, in Psalm xlv. 13. The King of glory
rules

rules there, and dwells there; you know God dwells in the highest heavens, and in the humble hearts, Christ is not only the King of nations, but King of saints, the one he rules over, the other he rules in.

Thirdly, Jesus Christ is his Father's King too, and so his Father calls him, God calls Christ his King in Psalm ii. 6. 'I have set my king upon my holy hill of Zion.' Well may he be our King, when he is God's King. But you may say, how is Christ his Father's King? Because he rules for his Father; there is a two-fold kingdom of God committed to Jesus Christ? pray, mark, Sirs.

First, A spiritual kingdom, by which he rules in the hearts of his people, and so is King of saints.

Secondly, A providential kingdom, by which he rules the affairs of the world, and so he is King of nations. Now beloved, the scripture saith, That the Father hath put all things in Christ's hand, John iii. 35. and the apostle tells us, God hath put all things under his feet. The Father judgeth no man; but hath committed all judgment to the Son, and he hath appointed him over his own house: now as Christ hath all, so he doth all, and rules all for his Father: and therefore the Father calls him his servant, Isa. xli. 3. Behold my servant: and in the other text, my King, because he rules for his Father, and doth his Father's will: so that, beloved, in these three respects, Christ is a King. Now I shall lay down some things wherein the Lord Jesus, doth infinitely excel all other kings of the earth.

First, Jesus is a King, that in a spiritual sense makes all his subjects kings. He hath a crown of glory for every subject. O what a glorious King is this? Now, that Christ makes all his subjects kings, see Rev. v. 10. saith the church there, Who hath made us unto our God, kings and priests.

Oh, Sirs, it is better to be a member of Christ than the head of a nation: Oh! how infinitely happy are all Christ's subjects, they be all kings, all heirs, all favourites, all sons, all true believers are so; the believer is the only happy man. Alas! where is there such
a king

a king to be found that makes all his subjects kings? There are many kings that undo their subjects, but Christ makes his subjects kings: many kings make their subjects beggars, but Christ makes his subjects kings; many kings put their subjects to death, but Christ died that his subjects might live: they give their subjects titles, but Christ giveth all his subjects grace and glory.

Sir, in a word this is the greatest nobility to be the servant of the great God: he is nobly descended who is born from above. Oh! how many lords hath that man that hath not Christ for his lord? Every sin is his lord, and every lust lords it over him. Now, where Jesus Christ comes to be King, he makes them kings to his Father, and kings over their lusts. Now beloved, here is the blessedness and happiness of our King, he makes us all kings, and gives us all crowns of glory.

Secondly, Jesus Christ is a most just and righteous King, he reigns in righteousness, he brings peace by righteousness, he makes us righteous, and therefore he is called, the Lord our righteousness, Jer. xxiii. 6. Now beloved, other kings oftentimes deal unjustly, they bear the sword to execute wrath upon well doers, and strengthen the hands of evil doers; justify the wicked, and condemn the godly, and break oaths, and falsify covenants, and many times they oppress their subjects, and wrong their people; and therefore the scripture says, 'When the wicked bear rule, the people mourn. Prov. xxix. 3. When the righteous is in authority, the people rejoice; but when the wicked bear rule, the people mourn.' But now beloved, Jesus Christ as he is a righteous King, so he rules in righteousness, and thou shalt have nothing but righteous dealing from him. Mind this text of scripture, which infinitely speaks out Christ's righteous dealing with poor souls, in Rev. xv. 13. 'Just and true are thy ways.' Mark, who are just, are true here; Why? it is the King of saints, 'Just and true are thy ways thou King of saints, justice and truth well becometh the King of saints, in Prov. iii. 27. It is said, 'Her

ways

ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace: speaking of wisdom, which is meant of Christ: Oh, what a golden King is here? What a glorious King is here! 'He is just and true, and all his ways are pleasantness, and all his paths are peace.' Oh, sirs, this is the excellency of Christ he oppresseth no body, he wrongs no body, therefore he is called just and true, he infinitely excels all the kings of the earth in righteousness; he is a righteous King, and deals for nothing but for righteousness.

Thirdly, Christ is a King that liveth for ever, and reigns for ever; other kings they are but of yesterday, they be dead and gone: what is become of all those great and mighty kings we read of? Why, they be gone like a tale, like a dream. But it is not so with the King of saints. 'The Lord is king for ever, he reigns for ever: and therefore the apostle calls him, a King immortal, eternal, as you may see in 1 Tim. i. 17. Christ is here called a King immortal, because he lives for ever. So in Heb. vii. 25. speaking of Christ, who ever lives, saith he, to make intercession for us. Now beloved, here is the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ, he lives for ever: other kings be dead, and their subjects may do what they will, but Jesus Christ lives for ever.

Fourthly, Jesus Christ is a King that hath a perfect knowlege of all his subjects; Oh, sirs, kings and princes and states do not know all their subjects; nay, they know very few: alas! they do not know a quarter of them, the poor subjects are unknown to them, they be not acquainted with all the wrongs and wants and miseries that their poor subjects ly under; we are unknown most of us to our prince: but now here is the excellency of Christ, he hath a perfect knowlege of all his subjects, he knows them all by name, he knows all their thoughts, all their wants, all their ways, all their conditions. Now I say this is a great happiness, that we have a King that knows us so well.

Oh, poor souls, Christ knows you all, all your wants, all your conditions, all your necessities whatsoever The Lord

Lord Jesus knows all thy sufferings, and therefore saith Paul in Phil. iv. 19. 'My God shall supply all your wants, Oh it is a sweet scripture, 'My God shall supply all your needs.' So I say to you sirs, your King will supply all your needs, he knoweth all your needs, all your straits, all your fears? ay, and he will supply all your needs. Oh! here is the excellency of this King.

Fifthly, Jesus Christ is a King that sits upon his Father's throne, at this very time he sits upon his Father's throne. But beloved, this is not all, Christ doth not only sit there himself, but he hath promised that all men who overcome shall sit down with him, upon the throne: you have a full text to this purpose, in Rev. iii. 21. 'To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me upon my throne.'

Mark sirs, Christ promises all his subjects, that they should sit upon the throne with him; now, I wonder where there is any king but Christ, who will suffer his subjects to sit upon his throne with him. O! Alas! this would be treason for a man to desire it. I remember among other things, I have read of a king, who passing over a water, his crown fell from his head into the water, and one of his poor servants out of love to him, leapt in and fetched it up, and for his more ease put it upon his head, that he might get the better out, for this the poor man had his head cut off. So high and mighty and lofty was this prince, ay, but sirs, the Lord Jesus is not so, he is no such proud king, he did not only uncrown himself to crown us, and wear the crown of thorns, that we might wear the crown of glory; but he consents, and gives leave to his subjects to sit upon the throne with him. 'To him that overcometh, will I grant to sit with me upon the throne.' Oh! What a glorious King is this, that every one of his poor subjects shall sit upon the throne with him. So in Rev. xxi. 7. 'He that overcometh, shall inherit all things.' A man would think, sirs, this very thing would draw the world after Christ.

Oh! How should this draw the affections of men to be in love with these great proffers and privileges, and

and honour that Christ bestoweth upon his poor followers? He doth not only make them kings, but he grants them to sit upon his throne with him; thou wouldst say, it were an honour indeed: Oh! saint, couldst thou look into heaven, and see Christ sit upon his throne? but this honour have all the saints, yea, much more, he makes them all kings, and grants to them to sit upon the throne with him.

Sixthly, Jesus Christ is a King that loves all his subjects, and all his subjects love him: and I am sure, that this cannot be said of any king under heaven, but it may be said of the Lord Christ, for he is a King that loves all his subjects, and all his subjects love him: and this I shall endeavour to show by this afternoon's exercise, and the next day I shall handle the other part, that all his subjects love him. There is nine or ten particulars wherein the love of Christ to his subjects doth appear, and is wonderfully manifested.

First, His love to his subjects is a primary love, we love him, saith the apostle, because he loved us first, 1 John iv. 19. We love him, and why? because he first loved us. (1.) His love is the cause preceeding, our love is the effect following. If he had not fired our hearts with the flames of his love, we should never have bestowed one spark of spiritual love upon Christ; He must draw before we can run; and therefore saith the church, Cant. i. 4. 'Draw us, and we will run after thee;' Sirs, we cannot run without drawing; he must draw us before we can run, and when he draweth we run. It was not man's loveliness that engaged God to love and save man: God loveth his enemies even in their sinful estate, though not with a love of well-liking to them, yet with a love of well-wishing to them.

Oh! Sirs, since God loved us when we were not like him, we must strive to be like him, who thus loved us: nothing can engage a saint to love God so much as this that God loved him so much. A minister once weeping at the table, and being asked the reason of it, answered, Because I love Christ no more. Indeed friends, this should grieve us that we love so little,

who are so much beloved. You have a famous saying of Augustine, "He loves not Christ at all, who loves him not above all." This is the first love wherewith God loves his people; it is a primary love.

Secondly, Christ is a King that loves his subjects with a distinguishing love, and a separating love: The general love of Christ is scattered and branched unto all the creatures in the world, but his special love, and exceeding great and rich love is only settled upon his church. Now if you ask me, what Christ's distinguishing love is? I shall name it, and but name it to you.

(1.) It is pardoning-love. (2.) It is redeeming-love. (3.) Calling-love. (4.) Justifying-love. (5.) Adopting-love. (6.) Sanctifying-love. (7.) Glorifying-love.

This, I say, is his peculiar love: Christ's love is not only sweeter than wine, but better than life; he is most lovely, he is altogether lovely; Christ is nothing but love to those who are his love.

Thirdly, Christ loves his saints with a protecting love, Isa. xlix. 15. 'Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she shall not have compassion on the son of her womb?' Can a woman forget her sucking child? Is it possible a woman should be so inhuman to forget her tender infant, and not have compassion on the son of her womb? 'Yes, saith the Lord, they may forget them, yet I will not forget thee.' God may as soon cease to be God, as cease to be good; he may as soon cease to live, as cease to love; No, no, he cannot forget them; did he forget Israel in Egypt or his church in Babylon, or Daniel in the lions den? Did he forget the three children in the furnace, or Jeremiah in the dungeon, or Jonah in the whale's belly, or Peter in prison, did he forget them? The wicked say indeed, the Lord doth forget, in Ezek. ix. 9. The Lord hath forgotten the earth, and he sees it not. But they are much mistaken, there are three or four texts of scripture, which I shall humbly offer to your serious consideration, that do wonderfully speak out God's protecting love to his people.

The first is in Rev. vii. 2, 3. You find there an angel

gel hath power given him to hurt the earth, and the sea. Now there comes another angel, and cries out, 'Hurt not the earth, nor the sea, nor the trees.' Why, what is the reason? In the 3 ver. 'Until we have sealed the servants of God in their foreheads.' Do not pour out your judgments upon them, until we have secured the servants of God. Oh! how wonderfully doth the Lord protect his people? So again, in Ezek. ix. Certain men be sent to destroy the wicked people, and among the rest, the Lord calls, and bids one 'Set a mark on them that sigh for the abominations of the land; and for the rest saith he, destroy them, old and young.'

Oh! first, this doth wonderfully set out God's protecting love to his people, so in Isa. iii. so. The Lord bids the prophet tell them, what sad judgments should come upon them, upon the kings, and princes, and great men, and soldiers. Now saith the Lord, 'Say to the righteous, it shall be well with them, none of this shall come near them.' Oh! how wonderfully doth this magnify God's protecting love, Isa. xxvi. 29. 'Come, my people, enter into your chambers, shut the door and hide yourselves for a little moment: why so, O Lord? why, 'Until his indignation be over past.' Come, saith God, I am resolved to execute my judgments on wicked men; therefore hide yourselves for a moment. And therefore, I say, let no man's heart fail him, it is for a moment, and then thy miseries shall end. Beloved, when our miseries are at the greatest, his help is at the nearest. Man's extremity is God's opportunity. When Mordecai is thoroughly humbled, the rod Haman shall be hanged.

But then, Fourthly, Christ loves his people with a most cordial love, he loves them with all his heart; yea, they are the dearly beloved of his soul, as himself calls them, Jer. xii. 7. 'I have given the dearly beloved of my soul into the hands of her enemies.' Christ's love to his people, it is not a lip-love, from the teeth outwardly; but a real love from the heart inwardly. Christ loves his people as the Father loves him, and

how is that, can you tell? No, all the men on earth, nor angels in heaven, cannot declare the love that the Father bears to Christ, and yet as God loves Christ, so doth Christ love his people. You have a full text for this, they are Christ's own words. 'As the Father loveth me, so I love you:' O sirs, how infinitely doth the Father love the Son, and how infinitely doth the Son love his people? Why he loves them as the Father loves him. O! Lord, what love is this? That the Saviour should love the sinner: that Christ should love the miserable sinner: and thus it is; Oh! sirs, believers are like letters of gold engraven on the very heart of Christ. 'O the breadth, the depth, the height, the length of the love of Christ, saith the apostle, it passeth knowledge.' As if so be, he want words to set it forth, Eph. iii. 29. 'The love of Christ which passeth knowledge.' As if so be, there were both want of words, and want in words, to set forth the love of Christ: but certainly it must be very great, for as the Father loves him, so he loves them. Alas! others love the saints, but how do they love them? Why, not with a cordial love; they do not love them for their good, but for their goods; it is more for the money of their purses, than for the grace in their hearts: they love the saints as the Samaritans did the Jews; just as men do with their sun-dial, never look on them but when the sun shines; why so? The world never looks upon the saints but in the time of prosperity. When the Jews flourished and were in their glory, Oh! what great friends were the Samaritans to them! But when the poor Jews were under affliction, then they had no worse enemies than they: Why, but Christ is not so, he loves thee when thou art poor, as well as when thou art rich; As well when thou art in thy rags, as when thou art in thy robes: When thou art in adversity, as well as when thou art in prosperity. Christ loves his saints as well upon a gallows, as though it were in a palace; 'for whom he loves, he loves unto the end,' Heb. xiii. 3. He is faithful who hath said,

I will

I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee; ' never leave thee in any condition, or any place. O! sirs, what a peace is this love? And therefore a rush for what the world can do, or for the world's love; it is like a Venetian glass, soon broken; it smiles now, and quickly frowns; it cries Hosanna to-day, and to morrow crucify him: but Christ's love is from the very heart.

Fifthly, Jesus Christ loves his people with a love of benevolence, John iii. 16. 'God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. And saith Paul, He loved me, and gave himself for me,' Gal. ii. 20. The Father gives the Son, and the Son gives himself, who loved me, and gave himself for me: All that Christ did and suffered, it is for me. All that Christ hath is mine. Oh! soul, Christ's love it is thine to pity thee: Christ's mercy is thine to save thee; Christ's graces are thine to beautify thee, and his glory is thine to crown thee: Christ's power is thine to protect thee, thou seest, he that is sure of God's love to him, is sure of God's power for him: and Christ's wisdom is thine to counsel thee, and his angels are thine to guard thee, and his Spirit is thine to comfort thee, and his word is thine to teach thee. There are four attributes of God which are of great support to Christians.

(1.) His faithfulness. (2.) His mightiness. (3.) His goodness. And (4.) His wisdom.

And therefore, sirs, it is your duty to live upon promise, while promises seem to run cross, Christ's love to you, is free love. All that he hath given you is free: his grace is free, his love is free, his salvation is free, his peace is free, and himself is free. A dram of grace in the heart, is better than a chain of gold about the neck. Now beloved, all that Christ hath bestowed upon you, it is free, and therefore it is a love of benevolence.

Sixthly, Christ loves his subjects with a love of compassion. Sympathizing with them in all their sorrows and sufferings; truly this is a great comfort indeed;

'In all their afflictions, saith the text, he was afflicted,' Isa. lxiii. 9. so saith the apostle, Heb. iv. 15. 'We have not an high-priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities.' That is, We have an high priest that is touched with the feeling of our infirmities, one that doth weep in our tears, and sigh in our sighs, and sorrow in our sorrows, and suffer in our sufferings: and therefore saith Christ, 'Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?' Oh! what a sweet love is this? A love and compassion and sympathizing with us in all our sorrows and sufferings: Christ was first persecuted by Paul in his members, and afterwards he was persecuted in Paul as one of his members.

Now beloved, Jesus Christ loves his subjects with a love of compassion; and therefore let thy suffering be what it will, Jesus Christ doth, as it were, bear a share with thee.

Seventhly, Jesus Christ loves his subjects with a love of delight and complacency, Prov. viii. 17. I love them that love me. The King shall greatly delight in thy beauty. Psal. xlv. 11. speaking there of Christ, The King shall greatly delight in thy beauty, with great delight and complacency. And therefore beloved, Christ calls his church, his love, his dove, his beloved, his fair one. Oh! how infinitely doth Christ love his church? certainly Christ bears a great love to his church: and hence it is you read, Christ 'walks among the golden candlesticks, and he feedeth among the lilies, and his delight is with the sons of men.' Although poor believers be ravens in the world's eye, yet they are doves in Christ's eye, they are very precious in his esteem; though they be the loathing of wicked mens souls, yet they are dearly beloved of God's soul, he delights in them, 'The King shall greatly delight in them.'

Eightly, Christ loves his people with an everlasting love, and an un denying love: it is a love that never dies, never waxeth cold; Christ's love is like a fountain ever flowing, and never dried up: whom
he

he loves from eternity, those he loves to eternity, and they are believers. Now sirs, is not this a great favour to be beloved of God? In John xiii. 1. 'He loveth them even unto the end: not for a day, a month, or a year, not for a flash and away, but even to the end. And in Jer. xxxi. 3. speaking there of his love, it is called, an everlasting love: 'I have loved thee, saith God, with an everlasting love.'

Oh, sirs, this is a love that shall bed and board with thee, that shall ly down and rise up with thee, that shall go to thy death-bed with thee, to the grave with thee, and to heaven with thee: The saints shall put off the jewel of faith when they die, but not the jewel of love, for that shall remain with them to eternity. God loves his saints with an everlasting love.'

Ninthly, With an universal love, his love is universal to all his saints. O! there is not one saint, but Christ infinitely loves; he loves poor Lazarus, as rich Abraham, and despised Job as well as honourable David; he loves the poorest saints, as well as the richest, he loves them all alike: God is no respecter of persons. Oh, where is there such a king, now as Christ? They love their nobles, they are their darling, but Christ loves all his subjects, Christ's love extends to all his saints: His love it is like the beams of the sun, which reacheth always east, west, north, and south, so doth Christ's love.

Tenthly, His love is a correcting love: Whom he loveth, he chastiseth. He correcteth every son whom he receiveth.

Eleventhly, Christ's love it is a directing love, he hath promised to guide and direct his people in the way wherein they ought to walk. Oh, put all these particulars together, and sure you must needs confess, that Jesus Christ loves his friends infinitely: as it was said of Lazarus, when Christ wept for him, they made this construction of it, O how he loves him. Oh, sirs, how doth Christ love you who are his people? He loves you infinitely, even beyond measure, his love passeth knowledge.

Now, O sirs, for the Lord's sake consider of it and let this draw forth your love to him.

I shall the next opportunity come to shew you the love of Christ's subjects to him. If the Lord give leave,

CANICLES V. 16.

THE spouse indeed was sick of love, but Christ exceeded her, for he died for love; 'While we were sinners, Christ died for us,' saith the Apostle; He loved us more than his own life, yea, the very life of Christ to him was not too dear for us. Some write of a fowl called the Pelican, and they say, That she feeds her young ones with her own blood. O! Sirs, Christ is our Pelican, that hath nourished and fed us with his own blood; 'My flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed,' saith Christ, John vi. 55. Christ's red blood hath taken away our red guilt; scarlet-red sinners are by grace become milk-white saints; all our precious mercies come swimming to us in precious blood.

Christ bled love at every vein, his drops of blood were drops of love; yea, the more bloody, the more lovely; he was most lovely upon the cross, because then he shewed most love to us.

The last day, I shewed you the great love which Jesus Christ bears to all his subjects; and the sum of my discourse was this, That Jesus Christ loves his subjects with an everlasting and undenyng love. That which I am now to shew you is this, That all Christ's subjects love him, and what a kind of love it is.

The saints love to Christ is vehement and strong; This will appear, if you consider to what the scripture likens and compares the saints love. Now it is compared to four things.

First, To sickness. (2.) To death. (3.) To the grave. (4.) To fire. To these things is a believer's love compared in scripture; I shall handle them in order.

First, Sickness, this is the first comparison which doth

both set forth the strength of the believer's love, this is set down in two places of this book of Canticles, Cant. ii. 4. 'Stay me with flagons, comfort me with apples, for I am sick of love;' and in chap. v. 8. 'Tell ye him whom my soul loveth, that I am sick of love.' She is overwhelmed, she is overcome, and even ravished with his love and beauty. Oh! I thirst, I faint, I pant, I long for him. Oh! sirs, the church is very sick, and ready to swoon; Never was Ahab so sick for a vineyard, never was Sifera so desirous for milk, nor Samson for water, nor Rachel for a child, nor Amnon for his sister Tamar, as poor broken-hearted sinners are for Christ: when Christ gets into the heart, he draws all the affections to him. I remember the speech of a gracious woman, "I have born, saith she, nine children, with as much pain as other women do, and yet I could with all my heart bear them over again, yea, bear them, and bear them all the days of my life, that I might be sure of a part in Christ." Oh, how infinitely do believers love Christ! David wonders at his own love, Psalm cxix. 97. Oh, how love I thy law! He makes a wonder as it were; with what vehemency he loves God's word, Oh, how love I thy law! So the spouse here she does not only love him, but she is sick of love, ready to die for love. O sirs, here is a sickness, but not unto death, but unto life, it is a sickness that still bringeth blessedness and happiness with it, a sickness that shall be cured by him, who is the great Physician of souls. This is the first; she compares her love to sickness.

Secondly, The next thing whereby she expresseth the strength of her love to Christ, it is by death; This you have in Cant. viii. 6. She here tells you, 'Her love is strong as death,' beloved, you know death is strong, it is the king of terrors, and the terror of kings; it subdues all sorts of people, high and low, rich and poor, old and young, good and bad, the greatest monarch, king and emperor, be thrown down by death, where did ever that man dwell that was too strong for death? If strength could have

resisted it, then Samson had mist it; could greatness have overlooked it, Nebuchadnezzar had escaped it; could beauty have outfaced it, then Absalom had never met it; could riches have bribed it Dives had avoided it. But alas, none of these gallants were hard enough for death, it trod on the necks of them all, and therefore, Oh, look upon death also, as a thing you must meet with, look upon your lives as a thing that you must part with. Now by this you may guess what love is, it is strong as death; Ay, strong indeed, Oh, how strong is death? Nay, believers love to Christ is not only strong as death, but stronger than death; as some scriptures make it appear. A believer's love to Christ is stronger than death. 'I am persuaded, saith Paul, neither life nor death, principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, shall ever be able to separate us from the love of Christ Jesus our Lord,' Rom. viii. 38. 39. Death tho' it may kill us, it cannot hurt us: tho' death may send us to the pit of darkness, yet it cannot send us to the place of torments, tho' it may take away our lives, yet it cannot take away our loves; bloody tyrants have taken away the martyrs lives for Christ, but they could never destroy their love to Christ. One of the primitive Christians when he came to suffer, "Oh, saith he, I shall die for my Saviour but once, Oh, I could die an hundred times for Christ." Alas! he was grieved because he could suffer but once, and had no more lives to lay down; O, I could die a hundred times for him. Oh, sirs, love is a thing that outlives all enemies, all persecutions, all dangers, nay, death itself, in Rev. xii. 11. saith the text, 'They loved not their lives unto the death.' And so saith Job, 'Tho' thou kill me, yet will I trust in thee;' as if he had said, Oh, Lord, tho' thou take away my prosperity, my greatness, my health, my goods, my children, yea, my life itself, thou shalt never take away my love; tho' thou kill me, yet will I trust in thee, Job xiii. 15. So that love is not only strong as death, but stronger than death; for love is the conqueror at the last.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, Another thing whereby she expresseth the strength of her love, and the strong affections to Christ, it is the grave: and this you have in chap. viii. 6. 'Her love is cruel as the grave.' The grave is the bed of darkness, which is always craving and never satisfied, but devours all that comes. Christ tells us in John iv. 14. 'He that drinketh of the water that I shall give him, shall thirst no more.' What, thirst no more? No more after the world, and worldly things? but more and more after Christ and heaven. 'He that drinks of the water that I shall give him, shall thirst no more.' No more after these poor low things, but more and more after Christ.

No hungry man did ever with more appetite long for bread, nor a thirsty man long for water, nor a naked man for cloaths, nor a covetous man for riches, nor a sick man for health, or a condemned man for pardon, than souls that are truly gracious do for Christ Jesus, 'My soul thirsteth for thee,' saith David in Psal. lxiii. 1. 'My soul thirsteth for thee,' why David, how doth your soul thirst for God? Why he tells you in Psal. xlii. 1. 'As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God.' Now mark, first, the poor hart which is hunted by dogs, his nature it is, as it were all over in a flame, in a burning heat, and then it pants, and thirsts, and is ready to die for water; now, saith David, 'As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God.' O the vehemency here of David's thirst? and therefore he tells you elsewhere, 'Whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none I desire on earth in comparison of thee,' Psal. lxxiii. 25. Do you desire none besides God, do you not desire your wives, your children, your crown, your kingdoms? Yea, these be desired in their places, but these were nothing in comparison of God. I remember the saying of a martyr, to one that asked him if he did not love his wife and children, when they wept by him, love them? "Yes, saith he, if all the world were gold, and mine to dispose of, I would give it all

to live with them, though it were in a prison: yet saith he, in comparison of Christ, I love them not."

Oh! sirs, we must tread upon father, and run over mother to come to Christ. You know Peter to come to Christ, would go upon the bare water rather than sail, he went upon the sea to Christ: truly it was a dangerous passage; but truly Peter bore up excellently well, while his faith bore up, but when his faith sank, then Peter began to sink too. The world is called a sea in Daniel, and the Revelation, and we must go upon these waters to Christ, and be sure to keep up faith, and then you will held out, but if faith fail, you will be sure to sink. O sirs! the believer's love is unsatisfied like the grave; none but Christ, none but Christ, says the martyr; and as Augustine saith, "Oh! Lord, take away all, only give me thyself."

Fourthly, Love is compared to fire, and it hath a most vehement flame in chap. viii. 9. Now, beloved, the saint's love to Christ, it is not only compared to fire, for its warming and heating, but for its kindling and increasing, and burning of flaming: 'Whilst I was musing, saith David, the fire burned;' Psalm xxxix. 3. What fire? why the fire in his heart, not the fire in his hearth. And when the apostles went in to preach the gospel, the fire sat upon their tongues, in Acts ii. 3.

Now beloved, as the saint's love is compared to fire in scripture: so you shall find afflictions, and persecutions, and dangers, and these cruel things that accompany the poor saints in the world, are called waters and floods in Daniel ix. and Psalm lxxix. and Matthew vii. But two scriptures that are more than ordinary, in Rev. xvii. 15. where they be called waters; 'The waters which thou sawest where the whore sat, they be people, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues;' The Spirit opens it to our hand: And you have another full scripture, in Rev. xii. 15. It is said there of the dragon, 'That he cast out much water like a flood after the woman. Now, what

what is this flood here? Why, this flood, It is bloody persecutions, and devilish persecutions. Now beloved, how long hath the dragon been spewing out her water upon the church, and wherefore is all this water thrown out? It is to quench the fire that I speak of: But can they do it? No, alas! they may spue till their eyes come out of their head, and to no purpose, Cant. viii. 7. 'Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it.' All the bloody persecutions, and afflictions cannot quench love: And therefore let wicked men send forth as many floods as they will, it cannot drown the saints love. All the water that Saul and his party threw after David, did not quench this. No, saith he, 'Tho' I walk thro' the valley of the shadow of death, yet will I fear no evil,' Psalm xxiii. 4. David is not afraid to go by death's door. And all the waters that Herod and the rulers threw after the apostles, could never quench their love.

Now, beloved, you shall find after the apostles were whipt soundly, they went away rejoicing, and rejoicing in this very thing, 'That they were accounted worthy to suffer for Jesus Christ.' And Heb. x. 'They took joyfully the spoiling of their goods.' And saith Paul, in Rom. viii. 35. 'Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine?' and the like. Believe it, sirs, all these are trying things, and yet, saith he, 'Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?' No, no, they cannot do it, there is nothing shall be ever able to separate us from the love of Christ; so that the believer's love is not made of such metal to be quenched by this flood, the saints are all on fire for Christ. And we find that great flood, which Nero and Julian poured out upon the primitive Christians. What? Did it quench fire? I remember one of them said, (saith he) 'Had I ten heads, they shall all suffer for Christ.' And another, (saith he) 'If every hair of my head were a man, they should all suffer for Christ. Alas! the poor Christians caught their torments like so many

many crowns; and therefore the scripture tells you,
 'That many waters cannot quench love.'

Now, beloved, put these four things together, and it is very clear, that the saints love to Christ is vehement and strong; they will hang for him, they will burn for him, do any thing for him, suffer the greatest torments, rather than he should lose the least dram of glory. But you will say, why do all Christ's subjects love him with this love?

The reasons are two, First, Because he deserves it, Secondly, He commands it.

First, Christ deserves our love: Why do we love him? Why he deserves it at our hands, were it ten thousand times more than it is. Beloved, it was he that created us: it is he that sanctifieth us: it is he that redeemed us: and loved us. It was he that changed our natures, and pardons our sin: it was he that made our peace, and pacified his Father's wrath for us: and satisfied his Father's justice for us: and wrought everlasting righteousness for us: it was he that bore our cross, that we might wear his crown: He waded through a sea of sufferings for us, to bring pardon to our souls, and doth not this Christ deserve our love? Oh! infinitely, infinitely. And truly sirs, the more Christ hath done and suffered for us, the dearer should he be unto us.

Secondly, As Christ deserves our love, so he commands it; Christ commands us to love him above life, above wife, above relations. Christ will have all, or none at all, Jesus Christ must weigh heavier than all relations in the balance of our affections: He commanded to love him, love all.

Application, I now proceed to the application of all to ourselves, which is the third thing in order to be handled, and I shall make three uses of it: First, For consolation. Secondly, Examination. Thirdly, Exhortation.

First of all, Is it so that Christ loves us with an everlasting and never dying love? Why then, here is

comfort

comfort for you who are his people. I speak only now to such, 'Comfort ye, comfort ye, comfort ye my people,' saith God, Isa. xl. 1. and saith Christ, John xiv. 1. 'Let not your hearts be troubled.' Christ would not have his poor saints troubled: And saith the apostle, 'Rejoice evermore,' 1 Thes. v. 17. 'Rejoice evermore.' Alas! How can we rejoice, when men vilify us, when men reproach us, and abuse us, and persecute us, how can we rejoice. But do but hark what Christ saith, Mat. v. 11. 'Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and speak all manner of evil against you falsely for my name's sake.' Mark, blessedness goeth in the first place. 'Blessed are you, when men shall revile you, and persecute you.'

O! sirs, it is matter of blessedness, and therefore be not cast down. You know what was said of old, 'In the world you shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world,' John xvi. 33. O poor soul! this is all the hell that ever thou shalt have, therefore be of good cheer, here thou hast thy bad things, thy good things are to come: here thou hast thy bitter things, but thy sweet things are to come: here thou hast thy prison: but thy palace is to come: here thou hast thy rags, thy robes are to come: here thou hast thy sorrow, thy joy is to come: here thou hast thy hell, thy heaven is to come: after the cup of affliction, comes the cup of salvation: the sweetness of the crown which shall be enjoyed, will make amends for the bitterness of the cross which was endured.

One passing by a place, where a cross lay on the ground, he caused it to be reared up, and found much riches and treasure under it. O! sirs, under the greatest troubles, ly your greatest treasures, patience for sorrow; the seed of sorrow on earth, shall reap a golden crop of joy in heaven; they that sow holiness in seed-time of their lives, shall reap happiness in harvest of eternity. Oh! sirs, never think to have an end of your sorrow, till there be an end of
your

your sin. The apostle tells us, 'Our light afflictions which is for a moment, work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.' A dram of reproach to a weight of glory! O what is a short moment of pain to eternity of pleasures! and therefore saints be of good cheer, here is comfort for you, your best days are to come, you are subjects who are beloved entirely, cordially, infinitely, with an unending love.

Use 2. For the use of examination. Is it so, that the saints love to Christ is vehement and strong? Why then, I beseech you examine and try, and search yourselves, how do your pulses beat after Christ? O that you would examine yourselves, that you may know whose you are while you live, and whither you shall go when you die, and what will become of you to eternity. O! sirs, are you sick of love? That was the first. Do you love Christ? Are you sick of love to Christ? For the Lord's sake, sirs, examine and try, and see whether you be sick of love to Christ. It is to be feared there be but few in the world sick of this disease. Many are sick for honours, that are but rattles to still mens ambitions; many are sick for gold and silver, which is but a little shining dirt; many men are sick for blood, who eat up the Lord's people like bread; God will lay on them the hand of vengeance, who lay on his saints the hands of violence; many are sick for superstition, and the human traditions of men which instead of bringing their souls to heaven, will beguile them of heaven; many are sick of their sufferings: Alas! who need fear the cross that is sure of the crown? But, O! how few are there that are sick of love to Christ? How many are there in the congregation, that are sick of love to Christ? For the Lord's sake, do not deceive yourselves, you see the spouse was ready to swoon and faint, and die for Christ.

Secondly, Her love was as strong as death, Nay, stronger than death. Is our love so? O soul! Can thou endure a prison for Christ, burning for Christ, hanging

hanging for Christ, forsaking all for Christ? Wilt thou venture on the waves for Christ, as Peter did? O sirs, for the Lord's sake look to yourselves: there are many who profess love to Christ in words, but more that deny him in their works. God was never more in mens mouths, and never less in mens lives. Beloved, is your love like the grave, never satisfied? Doeſt thou cry out more for Christ? Oh, give me Christ, and take the world who will. Is this flame in your souls? For the Lord's sake try yourselves, deal cordially with your poor souls.

Now, beloved, I have given you a taste of true sincere love, and blessed are they who cast their love into the sweet bosom of their Maker.

Use 3. I shall now close all with a word of exhortation. Well, sirs, if I should preach here till the morrow morning, what can I say more to make you to love Christ? He is most lovely, he is altogether lovely. Therefore love Christ, love Christ, all causes of love are in him, there may be particular causes of love in men and angels; but I say, all causes of love are in Christ: O sirs, love Christ; for if you do not, there is a dreadful curse pronounced against you, there is no heaven, no happiness, no crown, without Christ; for in him doth all fulness dwell, all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are in Christ, and the Father gives forth all his loving-kindness through Christ. Beloved, is it not better swimming in the water-works of repentance, than burning in the fire-works of vengeance. One of them you must; there is no coming to the fair haven of glory, without sailing through the narrow strait of repentance; And there say what you will, unless you believe in your Saviour, your souls will be miserable for ever; and therefore consider what I have said, and the Lord give you understanding in all things. Love Christ more than ever, more than all and above all, and then you shall be happy for ever more.

Christ is a King, Priest, and Prophet; a King for government and rule, a Priest for sacrifice and intercession, a Prophet for preaching and revealing the secrets of his Father's bosom.

CANTICLES, V. 16.

Beloved, you know how far we proceeded the last Lord's day, I finished the sixth particular, wherein Jesus Christ the King of kings, doth formount and excel all other kings, and it was thus, Jesus Christ loves all his subjects, and all his subjects love him; and I shewed you the wonderful love of Christ to his subjects, and his subjects love to him in many particulars. I now proceed to other particulars, wherein Christ excels the kings of the earth.

Seventhly, Jesus Christ makes all his subjects, his subjects do not make him. By him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, Col. i. 16. By him: By whom? By Jesus Christ, by Christ were all things created. 'He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not,' John i. 10. So in the 3 verse, 'All things were made by him, and without him, was nothing made.' There was not any thing made without Christ,' and all things were made by Christ. Beloved, Jesus Christ, he creates his subjects, he makes his subjects; and gives being to his subjects: 'In him we live, move, and have our being,' Acts xvii. 18. Our King gives us our being; he gives us a threefold being: Our first being in the state of nature, our second being in the state of grace, and our third being in the state of glory. This is the seventh thing wherein Jesus Christ excels all other kings, he makes his subjects, which none else can do.

Eighthly, Christ is the richest of all kings; Oh! Sirs, He is rich in love, He is rich in knowledge, rich in goodness, rich in wisdom, rich in grace, rich in glory. He is as rich as the Father himself: The riches of the Deity are in him, in him dwells all the fulness

ness, of the Godhead bodily; Col. ii. 9. Mark, first in him there dwells a fulness, of what? Why, of the Godhead; and not only so, but it dwells in him bodily. Alas! sirs, what are princes single crowns, or the pope's triple crown to Christ's many crowns? Christ hath not one, or two, or three crowns, but many crowns upon his head, Rev. xix. 12. 'His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns.' Christ is richer than any king, nay, richer than all the kings in the world, for he is Heir of all things, in Heb. i. 8. He is the greatest Heir in heaven and earth.

The Spanish ambassador coming to see the treasury of St Mark at Venice, which was so much cried up thro' the world, for a famous treasury, he fell a gropping of it, to find whether it had any bottom: and being asked the reason of it, saith he, "My great master's treasury differs from yours, in this, his hath no bottom as yours hath, alluding to the mines of the Indies." But alas! What is the proud Spaniard's treasure to Christ's treasure, and what are all his mines to Christ's mines? What are all the jewels and diamonds and crowns and sceptres of all the kings of the earth to Christ? The whole Turkish empire, saith Luther, is but a crust that God throws to dogs, which is a great part of the world indeed; but it is no more than a bone, or a crust, which God throws to dogs, O! sirs, Christ's riches are so many, they cannot be numbred, they are so precious they cannot be valued, so great, they cannot be measured, Oh, the infinite riches of our King, Christ is a mine of gold, which we must dig till we find heaven.

Ninthly, Christ excels all other kings in this too, he is a King whose power is absolute over all nations, and people, and kindreds, and tongues. Now, sirs, His will is a law, no man's will in the world is sufficient to be a law, but the will of our King is sufficient.

Tenthly, Jesus Christ is a King who rules over the souls and consciences of men, over the wills, and hearts

hearts of men, other kings may rule over the states of men, over the bodies of men, but not over their consciences. Now this is Christ's glory, which he will give to no other: Christ by his power, is able to subdue the wills of men, and the hearts of men, though never so stout and stubborn before. All the power of the world cannot do this: if all the kings and princes, and emperors of the world were put together, they are not able to subdue the heart of one poor man, they may beat his body, afflict his body, torment his body, but for his heart, I say, all the kings and potentates in the world, nay, all the angels in heaven, cannot subdue the heart of a poor sinner, and this is the glory of Christ: that he can do this. Heart work is God's work. The great heart-maker, must be the great heart-breaker. None can do it but he.

Eleventhly, Christ is a King that hath no need of any instruments, he makes use of them sometimes, but he needs not any: alas! sirs, what can the kings of the earth do without instruments? How can they govern their kingdoms without instruments? They must have this instrument here, and the other there, or else, farewell crown and kingdom quickly. But Jesus Christ hath no need of any. He can do any thing by his own power. By himself he destroyed Pharaoh and his great host in the red sea, Exod. xiv. By himself he overthrew Jericho that great city, Josh. vi. By himself he smote the great army of a thousand thousand men, the greatest army that ever we read of, 2 Chron. xiv. By himself he overthrew Ammon and Moab, and mount Seir, who warred against Judah, This now he did by himself.

Secondly, See what he hath done by weak means: He smote the kings about Sodom, even by Abraham and his poor family, Gen. xxiii. By weak means he overthrew that mighty army of the Midianites by Gideon's three hundred, Judges viii. By weak means he destroyed great Goliath, even by David, and great Sisera by a woman. By weak means he destroyed a

garrison

garrison of the Philistines, even by Jonathan and his armour bearer, 1 Sam. xv. 4. Now this he did by weak means, and much more.

Now, Thirdly, See what he did contray to means, Why, Contrary to means he delivered the three children from burning, being in the fire, Daniel iii. Contrary to means, he delivered Jonah from drowning in the sea.

Contrary to means, he delivered Daniel from devouring, being in a den of lions.

Contrary to means, he kept the Israelites from being drowned, being in the sea: I say, This he did contrary to means.

And I might shew what he hath done by contrary means, but I pass that: So that you see our King hath no need of instruments, and therefore he wonderfully excels all others.

Twelfthly, Christ is a King who will overcome and subdue all our enemies, all our enemies within us, and all our enemies without us: our King will subdue them all.

Our enemies are very many, and very mighty, high in power, and high in pride, and we very weak: we may all speak in David's words, in 2 Sam. iii. 29. saith he, 'I am weak this day, tho' anointed king.' How David, weak to day, and yet made a king to-day? Yes saith he, 'the sons of Zeruiah are too hard for me.' Why, believers you are all kings in a spiritual sense, you are kings elected, kings in a disguise; but yet poor hearts you are weak, tho' you are kings elected: The sons of Zeruiah are too hard for you. Why, but first, Jesus Christ is King of kings, King above all kings, and over all kings. 'And he must reign till he has put all his enemies under his feet.' 1 Cor. xv. 25. Mark, he must reign, he must of necessity, God hath spoken it, till he has put all his enemies under his feet, not only some, but all.

Oh! This is good news to saints, excellent news, What king can do this but Christ? What king can put all his enemies under his feet? What earthly king

king can subdue all his enemies? Alas they cannot subdue their own: for the most flourishing kings that we read of, have fallen before their enemies for want of strength; Richard the third, cried out in his distress, "A kingdom for a horse, a kingdom for a horse;" and yet all this could not save his life.

Alas! alas, the most flourishing kings have been so far from subduing their subjects enemies, that they cannot subdue their own; but Jesus Christ can subdue all his enemies; 'He hath all power in heaven and in earth given to him,' in Matth. xxviii. 18. So that if he speaks the word, all his enemies are overthrown even in a moment.

In the thirteenth place, Christ surmounts all other kings in this, he is a King that gives all his subjects the richest and best gifts of any other king whatsoever, in John x. 27, 28. 'My sheep, saith he, hear my voice, and they know me, and they follow me, and I give to them eternal life.' The wise God that he may invite and encourage poor souls to holiness of life, sets before their eyes the recompense of reward: that if the equity of his precepts do not prevail, the excellency of his promises may: he would fain catch men with a golden bait.

Abraham's servant gave jewels of silver and jewels of gold to Rebekah, that he might win her heart over to Isaac, in Gen. xxiv. 53. Oh, the jewels, the excellent jewels that Christ gives to poor souls to win their hearts to him; Christ gives us richly all things to enjoy, what can we desire more? 1 Tim. vi. 17.

Alas! the men of the earth give but poorly and penuriously, but Christ gives richly, Christ gives freely, no man in the world gives so freely as Christ; Christ gives frequently every day, every hour, he scattereth jewels to poor souls. The great king of Persia gave two of his courtiers, to the one a golden cup, to the other a kiss, and he that had the cup, complained to the king, that his fellow's kiss was better than his golden cup. Oh! Sirs, Christ doth not put us off with a cup of gold, but gives us the kiss; he gives his

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his best gifts to his best beloved ones, he gives his best love, his best joy, his best peace, his best mercies. Oh! Where is there a king like this King? Alas! earthly kings may give great titles, or a place in the court, and the like; they may give a title to-day, and a halter to-morrow, as in the case of Haman. They may smile to day, and frown to morrow, kiss to day, and kill to morrow: but Christ doth not so, he gives the best of every thing, the best of his love, his best blood; not the blood of his finger, but the blood of his heart. Oh, sirs, how far doth Christ excel others, in giving to his subjects the best gifts. Oh, sirs, What a gift is heaven? What a gift is pardon of sin? I wonder what king can give his people such gifts; and herein the Lord Jesus excels all others

In the last place, Christ makes all his subjects free; there is not one subject that he hath, but is free man and woman. There are some things that Christ frees from, and some things that he makes us free of; some things that he frees us from, and what is that? Why, That if which we were not free from, would undo us to all eternity.

First, He frees us from the curse, the cursed curse; if Christ had not freed us from the curse, we had lived cursedly, and died most cursedly, and been damned for ever; but Jesus Christ hath freed us, in Gal. v. 1. 'Stand fast, saith St. Paul in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free.' And in John iii. 36. 'If the Son make you free, then are you free indeed.' Again, he frees us from the guilt of sin; our pride would damn us, our covetousness would damn us, our unbelief would damn us, had he not freed us from the guilt of sin; but Christ frees his people from this. Again, he hath freed us from the power of the devil, in so much, that the devil hath nothing to do with us, in Acts xxvi. And he frees us from the flames of hell, the torments of hell, from the pit of hell; Christ hath cut off the intail of hell and damnation, 1 Thess. i. 'He hath freed us from the wrath to come;' that is,

is, Christ hath freed us from the flames of hell. Again, Christ hath freed us from slavery, from bondage, from the yoke, in Gal. v. 1. 'Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free, and be not again intangled in the yoke of bondage. We are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God in Eph. ii. 19. And Christ tells us himself, in Mat. xi. 30. 'My yoke is easy, and my burden is light.' Here we have burden upon burden, and yoke upon yoke: but saith Christ, 'My yoke is easy, and my burden is light.' Christ hath delivered us from slavery: we are not under the law but under grace: The things we are free from. And there are other things that we are made free of, and that in heaven we are all made free men and women of the new Jerusalem and we trade there, and have as good a right there as any other saints, we are fellow citizens, free men of heaven; not only of heaven, but of all the promises, and all the privileges that the saints enjoy.

Now, is not this a wonderful mercy that our King hath done for us, he hath freed us from all those miseries, which would ruin us for ever, and made us free of all the excellent privileges whatsoever, which poor souls can enjoy? Now, Oh! How far doth Christ excel all other kings? The rulers of the earth they may perhaps lay heavy burdens upon the consciences of men, and bodies of men, and estates of men: but Christ lays no such burthen upon us: No Christ hath made us free, and no people so free because Christ hath freed us upon the cross. Christ bought it dear enough, it cost him his best blood, his noble blood. I might name more particulars, where in Christ excels all other kings: but methinks these are very sufficient to demonstrate it.

Use 1. I shall close up this head with a word of application, and so shall finish this second title, King of kings.

First, Is it so that Christ is a threefold King, as we have shewed you, and is he a King that doth so far

surmount

surmount all the kings of the earth? Oh! then, however the world goes, here is comfort for saints that they have such a King. Oh! What a mercy is this? What a comfort is this to the Lord's people, that Christ is a King above all kings, and over all kings, and must reign, till he has put all his enemies under his feet? All his enemies must be brought down, and made his footstool. Now this should comfort the people of God, and teach them to wait Christ's leisure, and let him alone; some earthly kings would do great matters, but they want power, but Christ wants not power; for all power is given him in heaven and in earth. Now, sirs, did you really believe this, that all power is certainly given to Christ; certainly it would be a cordial to revive you in the worst times, and saddest of trials. He who is our Saviour, He who is our Head, our Brother, our Friend, is King of kings. Oh! sirs, this doctrine of Christ's kingly power, it is a very sweet doctrine to the members of Christ: And I beseech you, let these considerations which I have laid before you, bear up your spirits.

I have shewed you with what an intire love Christ loves his subjects. He is a king of kings, and can do any thing without instruments; he needs none to help him to do his work. He can (if he please) enable the most despicable creatures, as flies, and frogs, and caterpillars, and grasshoppers, to do his work: therefore let these considerations take impression upon your souls. If a man should tell you, you brother, or sister beyond seas were advanced to great honour, as Joseph, when he heard that his father was alive, 'Go, saith he, tell my father of all my glory and greatness in Egypt, he will rejoice of it.

Now I have told you a relation of Christ's kingly power; and therefore let this quiet your spirit: 'Be still, saith the Lord, and know that I am God,' in Psal. xli. 10. It is enough for you, to know that I am God, and therefore be still, consider what I am.

2. Use 2dly, By way of exhortation, I have one word to say to the saints, and another to sinners.

First, To saints, If it be so, that Christ is King of kings, and King above all kings, and over all kings. Oh! then, you who are the people of God, you who are near and dear to him, upon whom, and in whom Christ is formed and stamp'd; Oh, that you would give all the glory, and praise, and honour to Christ, study to advance his fame, 'he hath called us out of darkness into his marvellous light, saith the apostle, to shew forth his praise,' Oh, sirs, this should be our great endeavour. Oh, that you who pretend friendship and love to Christ, would endeavour in your places to advance Christ.

Secondly, A word or two to such as are none of the subjects of Christ, let me exhort you to believe in Christ, embrace him, receive him, to lay hold upon him, to be one with him, or else thou wilt one day cry out, as that king did in distress: Oh, "A kingdom for a horse, a kingdom for a Christ." O, thou wouldst give ten thousand worlds, if thou hadst them to give, for a part in CHRIST. Alas, sinner, what is the reason that Christ is no more in thy esteem? Thou wilt part with Christ rather than part with thy swearing, and drunkenness, and filthiness. O this is sad, there is no other name under heaven whereby we can be saved. He is the desire of all nations, and we can never be happy without him, and therefore, for the Lord's sake, sirs, as you love your own souls, lay hold upon him, that he may be the Saviour of your souls, the joy of your hearts, and your all in all; for the Lord's sake, sirs consider of it, you that do yet stand out against Christ: Oh, that I could but tempt you to Christ, Oh, that I could prevail with you to love Christ, and to have strong desires after him.

Alas, sirs, if you do not believe and part with all your iniquities, you must part with Christ at last; and what a sad parting will that be to part with God and Christ, and heaven? When thou wilt come to know what thou hast lost by hugging thy darling corruptions: Oh! what a sad condition will it be? And therefore I beseech you think of it in time, and be-

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lieve in your Saviour, that your souls may be saved in the day of Christ.

The MIGHTY GOD.

CANT. v. 16. He is altogether lovely.

The Doctrine. That Jesus Christ is infinitely and superlatively lovely.

I Finished the second title which is given to Christ in scripture, King of kings; I now proceed to a third, and that is mighty God. One of Christ's titles is, The mighty God. You have it there in Isa. ix. 6. He is there called the mighty God.

Beloved, I have shewed you from the second title, that Christ is a King, a King, above all kings; and a King over all kings, and the King of kings; and that his laws are most equal, his subjects most happy; having no other tax laid upon them than love and fear.

But now this title holdeth him forth, not only as a great King, but as a great God, before whom all kings and kingdoms are but as a little drop, or a small dust, Isa. xl. 15. From this title, The mighty God, I shall lay down this proposition, That Jesus Christ is true and perfect God, that is the point that I shall insist upon.

There are two sorts of people in the world that deny my doctrine, who deny the Deity of Jesus Christ, who say the second Person of the Trinity is not God.

First, The unbelieving Jews, if Christ had come as the Jews dreamed, as a great monarch trading upon nothing but crowns and scepters, and the necks of kings, and had all the potentates of the earth to attend his train. I say, had Christ come in this worldly glory, and pomp and power, then it may be the Jews would have believed on him, may be then he should have been their God. But now, beloved, because Christ came poorly and meanly, 'And made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant,' as the scripture saith, Phil. ii. 7. He took

none of his gallantry, none of his bravery upon him, but made himself of no reputation: and therefore the Jews slighted him, and disowned him. The Turks mock us at this day with our crucified God; Oh, say they, you worship a crucified God; and some of the Heathens say, They would not believe in a hanged God. Oh! blessed Jesus thus art thou reproached and despised by the unbelieving world, because thou camest poorly and died shamefully for our sins. They who despise the death of the Lamb, shall surely feel the wrath of the Lamb. They who turn away their ears from hearing Christ's voice now, Christ will turn away his ears from hearing their cries. Then,

Secondly, there be others, that deny the Deity of Christ: and there are some seditious ones in this nation, who say, that Christ is but mere man, and that every saint is as much God as Christ; and further they say that to equal Christ with God, is high blasphemy. They that will not own Christ at his first coming, Christ will not own them at his second coming: they that will not obey the truth of God revealed from heaven unto them, shall suffer the wrath of God revealed from heaven against them.

Oh, ye blasphemers, ye say, The Son is not God; the Father saith, He is God; now, who speaks true God or you? Let God be true, and every man a liar. That it is so, I shall give you most clear proofs. Express scripture speaks it forth, that Jesus Christ is true and perfect God. Tit. ii. 13. saith the apostle then, 'Looking for the blessed hope, and glorious appearing of the great God.' Mark, Christ is here not only called God, but great God. Oh, saints, he that came from heaven to make us righteous, will also come from heaven to make us glorious, looking for the blessed hope, and glorious appearing of Jesus Christ. Not only so, but Christ is also called, Mighty God. Isa. ix. 6. Wonderful Counsellor, The Mighty God. Nay, not only mighty God, but again, God blessed for ever. Christ God blessed for ever. Rom. ix. 5. Not only God blessed for ever, but the true God. 1 John v. 20. Jesus Christ

is there called, the true God, not only the true God, but a God for ever and ever. Heb. i. 8. Mark there, unto the Son he said, 'Thy throne is ever and ever.'

The Father, he calls the Son, God himself, and therefore well may we, Unto the Son he said, 'Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever.' Thus you see the doctrine fully proved, that Jesus Christ is the true and perfect God. But beloved, because the Deity of Christ is so much questioned at this day, and this being one of the serious and chiefest points of divinity, therefore I shall give you some considerations, or demonstrations, or arguments, to fortify you against this great error before named. First, That Jesus Christ is true and perfect God, He is for time, Co-eternal, for nature, Co-essential, for dignity, Co-equal with the Father.

First, For time Co-eternal, John xvii. 5. 'O Father, glorify thou me with thyself, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.' You see here, first, Christ was before the world was, Christ was from everlasting, from the beginning, Prov. viii. 22. Speaking concerning Christ, 'I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, before ever the earth was.' And therefore Christ is called the everlasting Father, Isa. ix. 6. So in Rev. i. 8. Christ there speaking of himself, saith he, 'I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, which was, and is, and is to come, the Almighty.' Mark, first, Christ is the same before time, in time, and after time: 'Which was, and is, and is to come.' Now, beloved, none can be eternal but God, but Christ is eternal, and therefore he is God, and co-eternal with his Father.

Secondly, He is for nature Co-essential, 'I and my Father are one,' saith Christ, John x. 30. 'There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Spirit, and these three are one.' Mark here, they are one. John xiv. 8. When Philip desires to see the Father, 'Shew us the Father, and it is enough,' saith Christ in the 9 and 10 ver. 'He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father.' How so? 'For I am in the Father, and the Father is in me.' So that you see Christ

is more than mere man, he is one with the Father. Oh, sirs, He is Theanthropos, God-man, if you make the Son mere man, you must make the Father so too.

Thirdly, He is for dignity Co-equal with the Father, Phil. ii. 6. 'Who being in the form of God, thought it no robbery to be equal with the Father.' Christ thought it no diminution of his Father's glory to be equal with his Father in glory. And you shall further find, that all the honour which belongs to God, the Father hath commanded us to give it to the Son. You have a full text, John v. 23. 'That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father, for he that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father.' Therefore it is clear to every eye, that Christ is for dignity co-equal with the Father: For the Father hath commanded us to give the same honour to Christ which is due to him: so that it is no blasphemy at all, certainly, to equal Christ with God, for in him are the riches of the Deity, and the fulness of the Godhead dwells bodily in him, as you may see, Col. ii. 9. This is the first argument, He is for time, co-eternal, for nature, co-essential, for dignity, co-equal with the Father.

Secondly, I shall lay down this argument to prove the Deity of Jesus Christ: consider the work of creation, surely he that made heaven and earth, must needs be a God, you will yield to this: so saith the Lord himself. 'All the gods that hath not made heaven and earth, shall perish from the earth, and from under heaven.' Jer. x. 11. But now, behold Jesus Christ made the heavens and the earth, and all things therein, and therefore he is God; see a few scriptures for this, John i. 3. 'All things were made by him.' Mark, this is by Christ, all things were made by him, and without him was nothing made that was made, Col. i. 16. By him were all things created in heaven, and in earth, visible, and invisible, all things were made by him, and for him, So again, John i. 10. 'He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.' Now, beloved, had Christ been less than

than God he could not have made heaven and earth: and therefore he is the God of glory, the great God that now sits upon the throne: for he created the heavens and the earth, and all things therein.

Thirdly, That Christ is the true and perfect God, appears, if you consider the works and miracles which he did in the days of his flesh: Here is another unanswerable argument to prove the Godhead of Jesus Christ. The winds and the seas obey him, the devils come out of the possessed, the blind receive their sight, the lame walked, the deaf heard, the dumb spake, lepers were cleansed, the dead were raised, the sick where healed. Oh, who could do this but God, as you may see, Mat. xxi. 5. But you may see the apostles did great miracles and yet were no gods. Why, it is true they did great miracles, but in whose name did they do it? Was it in their own names, and by their own power? No, beloved, they themselves confess the contrary, Acts iv. 10. They tell you, it is not in their own power, but in the name and power of Jesus Christ. So in Acts iv. 18. We do in the name of Christ. So that beloved, this is a strong argument to prove the Deity of Christ, they did great miracles in his name, and by his power his disciples did great miracles. And with this Christ satisfied the disciples of John, 'Go and tell what things ye hear and see, how the lame walk, and the blind receive their sight: Go and tell John. Now I say, these great things could be done by none but by a great God; and therefore Jesus Christ is not only the Son of man, but the Son of God, even God blessed for ever.

But Fourthly, Consider divine worship is due unto Christ. Now you know worship is proper only to God, worship him that made heaven and earth, and the sea, said the angel, Rev. xiv. 7. Worship only is proper to God alone. Now beloved, all the acts of worship that belong to God the Father, are given to the Son Jesus Christ, both angels and men are commanded to worship him, as well as we. Heb. i. 6. Let all the angels of God worship him. And in Phil. ii. 10.

'That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things on earth.' Mark first, things in heaven, as well as things on the earth, must worship Christ, and Christ himself saith, John xiv. 1. 'Ye believe in God, believe also in me.' Mark first, speaking to those that believe in God, saith he, 'Ye believe in God, believe also in me.' Now beloved, we are commanded to pray to Christ, to glorify Christ, to believe in Christ, to honour Christ, and worship Christ; and therefore the saints have prayed, Lord Jesus receive my spirit, as Stephen did. So that you see worship is due to Christ, both from angels and men, and therefore he must needs be God.

Fifthly, There be clear predictions of the coming of Christ under the old testament. No sooner was man fallen, but Christ was promised, 'The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head.' All the prophets foretold of the Messiah, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Hosea, Daniel, Malachi, and the rest of them, how falsely he should be accused, and how basely he should be used, and this will be enough to condemn the unbelieving Jews, and make them speechless in the great day of accounts. I might give you the saying of the same prophets, but you may find them yourselves, search the old Testament, and you shall find them all speak more or less of Jesus Christ. This I have clearly proved by express scripture, and undeniable arguments, that Jesus Christ is true and perfect God.

I proceed to the use and application of it to ourselves.

Use. The first shall be for information; if it be so, that Jesus is true and perfect God: Then though this be a strange truth to some, yet it is a sound truth. Though the mystery be deep, yet the divinity is true, that he who made man, became man, suffered by man, and for man, without controversy, saith the apostle, great is the mystery of godliness, what is the matter? 'God manifested in the flesh,' 1 Tim. iii. 16. Without controversy, without all doubt, a great mystery, saith the apostle, 'God manifested in the flesh.'

The

The school-men compare the incarnation of Jesus Christ to a garment made by three sisters, and one of them wears it. So all the three Persons in the Trinity had a hand in the garment of Christ's flesh, but the second Person he wore it, he was God manifested in the flesh: And this is a great mystery. And truly sirs, it is a great mystery for happiness to become a curse, Gal. iii. For him that made the angels to become lower than the angels, Heb. ii. For the Creator to become a creature: For him that had the riches of all in him to become poor: Oh! this is a great mystery, that he whom the heaven of heavens cannot contain, his glory shall be wrapt up in the rags of flesh; that the great God should take upon him a piece of earth: that he who hangs the earth upon nothing, should hang upon a cross between two thieves, truly a great mystery: That he who rules the stars, should suck the breasts, that he who thunders in the clouds, should be cradled in a manger. Oh! a great mystery that Abraham's Lord should become Abraham's son: That the God of Abraham should take upon him Abraham's seed, what a mystery is this? He was conceived in the bowels of his mother, that he might be received into the bosom of his Father. Therefore saith the apostle, 'Without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness, God manifested in the flesh.' God's Son became man's Son, that we poor mens sons might become God's sons.

But secondly, Is Jesus Christ true and perfect God? My second inference is this. That Jesus is a precious God: He is honey in the mouth, beauty in the eye, joy in the heart, and music in the ear. Let all their money perish with them, who esteem all the gold in the world worth one day's society with Jesus Christ, said that great Marquess when he was tempted with money. Oh, sirs! Christ's members are the happiest, Christ's comforts are the sweetest, Christ's reward is the highest, Christ's precepts are the purest, Christ's glory is the greatest, Christ's love is the truest, Christ's riches are the most precious, he is the glo-

ry of God, the paradise of angels, the beauty of heaven, the Redeemer of men, in Heb. i. 3. He is there called 'the brightness of his Father's glory,' he is the rich jewel in the cabinet of glory, he is the sparkling pearl, whosoever hath him cannot be poor, and whosoever wants him cannot be rich.

Thirdly, If Christ be true and perfect God, Then Christ's members are the greatest and happiest. Christ is God Almighty's only Son, believer's are God Almighty's only daughters. You read of God's daughters in Psal. xlv. Christ is the King, believers are the queen: Christ is the Bridegroom, believers are the bride: Christ is the Lamb, believers are his wife, Rev. xxi. 9. What shall I say? The angels in glory are in a very glorious state, and yet let me tell you, believers in Christ be higher than angels, they are servants, we are members, they be the friends of the Bridegroom, we are the bride, they have their personal glory, we have the same glory for substance with Jesus Christ, John xvii. 22. 'The glory which thou hast given me, saith Christ, I have given them. Believers be nearer the throne than angels; and this doth wonderfully spezk out that we are higher than the angels, in Rev. v. The four beasts are nearer the throne than angels.

Oh! Beloved, how are believers advanced? How high are we become, poor dust and ashes to be above angels? And this is the greatest happiness which we get by Christ's assuming our nature for the salvation of our souls.

Again, Christ's members be not only the greatest but the happiest: Our renewed condition is as good in Christ, as it was bad in Adam, oh sirs, we were more cursed out of Christ, than we are blessed in Christ. Christ is as full of life, as Adam was full of death. Christ is as full of sweetness to us, as Adam was a bitterness to us. Truly soul, if thou say Christ is thine, I will speak next and say, soul thou hast that which is more worth than a king's ransom; that which is more worth than all that which the devil promised Christ.

when he shewed him all the kingdoms of the world. Oh, the happiness of poor believers, 'There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus,' saith Paul, Rom. viii. 1. Therefore they are happy.

But Fourthly, Christ Jesus is true and perfect God; Then we infer from hence, that God's love and good-will to mankind was very great. That Jesus Christ should come from heaven to take our nature, that we might be partakers of the divine nature; Christ took upon him our shame, that we might be partakers of his glory. One drop of his blood is worth a sea of ours, and yet he died our death that we might live his life: He suffered our hell, that we might enjoy his heaven. Oh, how infinitely did he love us? He endured the forest pains, that we might enjoy the sweetest pleasures. The scripture tel's us, that he came leaping, he came with such a good will, he came leaping. As you know when a man goes leaping, you may know that it was with a good will; 'He came leaping and skipping, Cant. ii. 8. He came leaping upon the mountains, and skipping upon the hills?' Leaping saith Gregory, how so? Why, saith he, From the throne to the womb, from the womb to the cradle, from the cradle to the cross, and from thence to the throne again; this was his leap. Oh sirs, Oh sirs, how much did this Jesus suffer for poor believers? He was hanged upon the cross on mount Calvary, that we might sit on thrones in mount Sion.

2 Use. Secondly, By way of exhortation: first, To sinners, to unbelievers, to graceless persons, I have a few words to say. Oh, sirs, Oh, sirs, methinks I cannot but do towards you as Christ once did towards Jerusalem, when he came nigh the city, he wept over it. Truly sinners, your state is a weeping state, your state is a miserable state, you ly open to all the wrath, all the vengeance, all the curses under heaven. O poor miserable sinners, cannot you pity yourselves? The Lord of heaven pity you. Did Jesus Christ come from heaven to you sinners, and will not you come out of your sins to come to Christ? Did Christ come

from his Father's bosom, and left his throne and crown, and all his glory, to come to a poor lost world, and to die and suffer here for poor lost sinners? And what (sinners) will this make no impression upon you? Let me tell you, sirs, Christ came into the world, for no other end and reason, but only to die for sinners. It was the great design of Christ to save poor sinners. Sirs, if you will not credit me, look into the scripture, and then surely you will believe it. 1 Tim. 1. 15. 'This is a faithful saying, saith the apostle, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners.' Mark, sirs, 'He came into the world to save sinners.' Christ hanged upon the cross, and wept upon the cross, and died upon the cross to save sinners, it was for poor sinners, all the hardships, all the wants, all the trials and sufferings which he met with. it was for the sakes of poor sinners. Christ hath suffered all this wo and misery for thee, and wilt thou not leave thy swearing and drunkenness, and thy wickedness for Christ? O! the sad day that is coming upon thee! How canst thou answer this before God Almighty, that Jesus Christ the King of kings, should come into the world and abase himself so much as to be in a mean estate, and yet that this should nothing affect you? O! Who will pity you when you are damned, when you are howling and roaring in hell, that would not pity yourselves? Oh! for the Lord's sake, consider that God should come and take your nature, and that he should take our rags, that we might wear his robes: And what will you rather remain in your sins, and die, than come to Christ for life? O! sinners, for the Lord's sake, put off your beggarly rags, that you may put on his lovely robes.

I have read of Alexander the Great, that when he came against a city, he used to set up a candle and if they yielded before the candle was out they should have quarters, but if they stood out they might expect nothing but hanging, drawing and quartering. Oh sirs, Christ sets up a candle to thee, and if thou wilt come in to day, thou shalt have mercy, or else there

here will be none! If all the angels and saints in heaven should fall upon their knees, and say, Oh, Lord, spare this poor creature, one dram of mercy for him, it would not be regarded, the Lord would not hear them; and therefore for the Lord's sake consider men are sentenced; not only for their sinfulness, but for their slothfulness; men may perish for being servants that are unprofitable, as well as for sinners that are abominable: methinks you should take as much delight in those precepts that enjoin to holiness, as in those promises that assure happiness; if the day of mercy leave you graceless, the day of judgment will find you speechless; though you may resist the judgment that he lays before you, yet you can never resist the judgment that he lays upon you, there is no standing before Christ, but by standing in Christ; ungodly men fear no wrath, because they feel no wrath; because they sin unpunished, they think there is no punishment for their sins, because he goes on to spare them, they go on to provoke him; as he adds to their lives, they add to their lusts, because he is very good, they will be very bad: because justice winks, men think he is blind: because he doth not reprove them for their sins, therefore they think he doth approve them in their sins, justice will avenge the quarrel of abused mercy; the longer God forbears, not finding amendment, the sorer he strikes when he comes to judgment.

Oh, sinners, tho' the patience of God be lasting, it is not everlasting, if by the warning piece of God, you shall be consumed: The longer God is fetching about his hand, the heavier will be the blow when it comes, 'I gave her space to repent of her fornication, but she repented not.' What follows? 'Behold I will cast her into a bed; and they that commit adultery with her,' Rev. ii. 21, 22. The day that begins in mercy may end in judgment. God is silent so long as our sins will let him be quiet. But know, that God hath vials of wrath filled with indignation, for vessels of wrath fitted for destruction: if God's mercy do not draw

draw you to repentance, God's judgment will draw you to destruction, the sea of damnation shall not be sweetned with a drop of compassion.

Oh, sinners, either seek out a Saviour to deliver you from the wrath of God, or else find out a shoulder to bear you up under the wrath of God. Oh, that you would but consider your ways, hath not God said, the no swearer, nor drunkard, nor whoremonger, nor adulterer, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven? And such are some of you, God knows it, and your own consciences know it, and yet you flatter yourselves and speak peace to yourselves, when God speaks not a word of peace to you. Oh, sinners, think of this before the bottomless pit hath shut her mouth upon you: Oh, do no longer neglect God and your own salvation, Heb. ii. 3. 'How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?' If you neglect the great salvation, you cannot escape the great damnation.

Secondly, Believers, let me beseech you to stand fast and to hold fast that which you have already, Rev. 19. 'Be then faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.' He hath a crown for runners, but a curse for runaways. As you look for happiness, so long as God hath a being in heaven, so God looks for holiness as long as you have a being on earth. As many as walk according to the rule, peace be on them Gal. vi. 16. To tread on any other path on earth, is but to mistake your way to heaven; whilst you are on this side of eternity, you must hold the sceptre of grace in your hands, till God set the crown of glory upon your heads: This is the sparkling diamond that is set in the apostles crown, 2 Tim. iv. 7. 'I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith.' O believers! it will be your happiness, your glory, your honour another day, if on this day you be found faithful. O! do not turn your backs upon the truths of God, as too many in these days have done: they have gone from one religion unto all, till at last they have come from all religions unto none: that man's beginning was in hypocrisy

whose end is in apostacy; indifferency in religion, is the next step to apostacy from religion.

Oh! do not make him a stone of stumbling, that God hath made a stone for building: if the golden chain of duty will not hold you, the iron chain of darkness shall bind you: if you abuse your liberty in one world, you will lose your liberty in another: if you had made as much conscience in your liberty, as you have had liberty for your conscience, it had been well. That soul was never related to Christ, that was never devoted to Christ, there is no obtaining the prize of happiness, without running the race of holiness.

Oh! for the Lord's sake, do not you begin in the Spirit, and end in the flesh. Oh, do not put your hand to the plough, and look backward; be not true to the father of lies, and false to the God of truth; keep close to the Son of God, to the word of God, to the ordinances of God, to the day of God, to the ministers of God, to the people of God, and thou wilt be safe. Gal. vi. 9. 'Be not weary in well-doing, for in due season you shall reap, if you faint not.' I shall wind up all with that saying of Ignatius, "They who adhere to them who adhere not to truth, shall never inherit the kingdom of God."

THE EVERLASTING FATHER.

CANT. v. 16. He is altogether lovely.

Doctrine. That Jesus Christ is infinitely and superlatively lovely.

MAN is the excellency of the creature, the saint is the excellency of the man, grace is the excellency of the saints, glory is the excellency of grace.

I now proceed to a fourth title, and that is, Everlasting Father, for this see, Isa. ix. 6.

Beloved, we have shewed you from the third title, Mighty God, That Jesus Christ is true and perfect God, a mighty God, mighty with God, mighty as God,

God, the great and mighty God: But now this fourth title holdeth him forth to be a Father; not only a Father, but an everlasting Father! The Everlasting Father.

The proposition which I shall lay down from the title, is this, That God in Christ is a believer's everlasting Father. That I may clear up this point, I shall lay down these truths.

First, That God in Christ the Everlasting Father begot himself in us, and us in himself, he is both the author and finisher of our faith, Heb. xii. 2. Of all our joy, of all our peace, of all our life, of all our salvation: He is a Father ever begetting and bringing forth himself in us; his light is in us, his love is in us, his nature is in us, his wisdom is in us, his power and strength is in us: 'Of his fulness, we all have received grace for grace,' John i. 16. We believers were in time past, we in time present, in time to come, we that were, we that are, we that shall be hereafter, shall receive of his fulness: and therefore he is called, The everlasting Father.

He is the Sun, we are the beams; He is the Fountain, we are the streams: He is the Root, we are the branches: He is the Head, we are the members: He is the Father, we are the children: and hence it is, that believers are called his off spring: 'We are the off spring of God,' saith the apostle.

In creation, God hath given us to ourselves; but in redemption he hath given himself to us; it is a greater favour to be converted, than to be created; yea, far better to have no being, than not to have a new being, it is only the new creatures that are heirs of the new Jerusalem.

Secondly, God in Christ calleth all his children by his name; he putteth his name upon them.

Do you mark first, 'I will write upon them the name of my God,' in Rev. iii. 12. The saints are called godly, from God; Christians from Christ; spiritual, from the Spirit, and heavenly, from heaven, because their conversation is there, because their

Head

Head is there, and they be heirs of heaven. So the wicked be called devilish, from the devil, and the cursed, from the curses: and worldlings, from the world: and sinners from sin. Oh, the great difference that there is between the names of saints, and the names of the wicked. The ungodly be called dogs, vipers, swine, thorns, and ravening wolves, who lick up, and suck the blood of the innocent: But the saints, they are called jewels, treasures, kings, doves, lilies, and heirs of the kingdom of glory. And hence it is, that some good men have gloried more in their name Christian, than in their name emperor; and have thought it a greater honour to be a member of Christ, than to be a king upon a throne, a greater honour to be one of Christ's little ones, than one of the world's great ones. Indeed sirs, a good heart is better than a great estate; inward holiness is better than outward happiness. A Christ without honour, is better than honour without a Christ. Piety without prosperity, is better than prosperity without piety, goodness without greatness, is better than greatness without goodness. This is the second.

Thirdly, God in Christ is a Father, who is tender and full of bowels towards his poor children; when we were full of blood, then he was full of bowels. Christ is more tender of his body mystical, than he was of his body natural; he suffered his body natural, to be hungry, to be thirsty, to be weary, to hang upon the cross, to bleed upon the cross, to suffer upon the cross, to be pierced and bored with nails upon the cross. Oh, he went out of the furnace, to keep us out of the flame.

But now mark, sirs, for his body mystical. Oh, how tender is he, he loves them, he pities them, he smiles upon them, he carries them in his bosom, and dandles them on his knees. Oh! they are the beauty of his eye, the joy of his heart; he cannot endure to see them wronged, to see them injured or abused, every blow they have, goes to his very heart, 'Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me!' You see how tender

tender Christ is of his body mystical. This is our Jonah, who threw himself into the sea of his Father's wrath, to save us from drowning. He hath shut the door of hell, to save us from perdition, and he hath opened the gates of heaven, to let us into salvation. This is the third.

Fourthly, God in Christ is a Father that layeth out for his children: he gives them something in possession, but more in reversion; a little in hand and great deal in hope.

First, He giveth them something in hand: he layeth out for us, he giveth us the air to breathe in, and the earth to tread upon, he gives us the sun, the moon, and the stars, wind, water, and fire, he gives us the fishes of the sea, the beasts of the earth, and the fowls of the air: poor man liveth by death, our natural life is preserved by the death of the creature, and our spiritual life by the death of the Saviour; so that I may say, we live by death. It is a man's duty to serve God, since God hath made all the world to serve him, in 1 Tim. vi. 17. saith the apostle, 'Who giveth us all things richly to enjoy.' Mark, he doth not only give us all things, some all things; not only things, but all things richly to enjoy.

Secondly, God in Christ is a Father that layeth out for his children, as well as layeth out, in Psal. cxviii. 19. 'O how great is thy goodness that thou hast laid up for them that fear thee!' David wonders at it. Oh how great is thy goodness which thou hast laid up! Mark, the words so, in 2 Tim. iv. 8. 'Henceforth I have laid up for me a crown of righteousness: What oughtest thou for you Paul?' Not not only for me, but for all them that love his appearing.' So again, see another scripture for this, 1 Cor. ii. 9. 'As it is written, (saith the apostle) Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither can it enter into the heart of man to conceive.' Why, first, what is this which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither can it enter into the heart of man to conceive? Why, mark, 'The things that God hath prepared for them that fear him.' Oh, beloved, God gives to his children

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children the best portion, the richest portion, the greatest portion: all things be theirs, life is theirs, death is theirs, things present are theirs, and things to come are theirs: God is theirs, Christ is theirs, the Spirit is theirs, heaven is theirs, and what can they have more? In 1 Cor. iii. 22, 23. God gives his children in this world a talent of grace, and in the world to come a talent of glory, they shall wear Christ's crown above, who wear his cross below.

Fifthly, God in Christ doth protect and defend his children from their enemies, and from Satan, from sin, from the world, from the curse, and from the second death, which is hell, in Rev. ii. 11. 'He that overcometh shall not be hurt by the second death.' Mark, a believer may feel the stroke of death, but he shall never feel the sting of death: The first death may bring his body to corruption, but the second death shall never bring his soul to damnation: Though he may live a life that is dying, he shall not die a death that is living: He that is housed in Christ, shall never be housed in hell; God protects his children from all wrongs and injuries, in Psalm cv. 14. 'He suffers no man to do them wrong, yea, he reproveth kings for their sakes.' Pray, mark the phrase well: Sirs, if kings will lay on saints the hands of violence, God will lay on kings the hands of vengeance. 'He reproveth kings for their sakes.' If kings will wrong the poor saints for Christ's sake, Christ will reprove kings for the saints sake, so saith the word of God, 'They that be gods before men, be but men before God.' If men will throw saints into prison for their piety, God will throw them into hell for their iniquity. Mark what the prophet saith, in Isa. xxx. 33. Pray mark the phrase, 'Tophet is prepared of old; yea, for the king it is prepared.' And if so be the prophet should speak so down-right, as though hell were chiefly prepared for great men.

Oh, sirs, hell is prepared for great men as well as mean. Those to whom God bestows great mercies, if they abound in great vice, God will inflict great
penis-

punishment. How shall they be able to lift up their heads before Christ, who did lift up their heads against him? 'The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ.' Acts iv. 26. Christ will pass a sentence upon every sentence that is past. He that saith, 'Come ye blessed,' will also say, 'Go ye cursed.' This is the fifth.

Sixthly, God in Christ is a Father that teacheth his children, and instructs his children: 'Thy children shall all be taught of the Lord.' Isa. liv. 13. All God's children be taught of God, God teacheth all his children, and what doth he teach them? Why, among other things he teacheth his children those six lessons.

First, He teacheth them to deny themselves. A true believer will lay down his lusts at the command of Christ, and his life for the sake of Christ.

Secondly, Christ teacheth them contentment. Here is another divine lesson which Christ teacheth his children. A believer will be contented to bear the wrath of man for him, who bore the wrath of God for him.

Thirdly, The vanity of the creature. He teacheth us, that all things below, 'be but vanity, and vexation of spirit.'

A fourth thing is, The deceitfulness of sin.

Fifthly, The deceitfulness of the heart.

Sixthly, The right knowledge of himself.

Oh, Christians! Have you learned these lessons? Then let all your actions be Christ-like, and walk as you have him for an example: He lived to teach us how to live, and he died to teach us how to die. He that will not follow the example of Christ's life, shall never be saved by the merits of his death, for he is the root on which a saint grows, so he is the rule by which a saint squares: If he be not thy Jacob's staff to guide thee to heaven, he will never be thy Jacob's ladder to mount thee up to heaven. We should be as willing to be ruled by Christ, as we are

willing

willing to be saved by Christ, (God made one Son like to all that he might make all his sons like to one.) If the life of Christ be not your pattern, the life of Christ will never be your portion. This is the sixth.

Seventhly, God in Christ is a Father that stamps upon all his children the lovely image of Jesus Christ, they resemble him to the very life; as was said of Constantine's children, "They resemble their father to the life." So we may say of believers, they resemble Christ to the life: God will suffer no man to wear the livery of Christ upon him, who hath not the likeness of Christ within him, 2 Cor. iii. 18. 'We all (saith the apostle) beholding with open face as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.

Oh, sirs, what a rare jewel is grace! The God of grace calls it glory. Mark, 'from glory to glory;' that is, from one degree of grace to another: grace is glory militant, and glory is grace triumphant. Grace is glory begun, and glory is grace made perfect: grace is the first degree of glory, glory is the highest degree of grace: grace is the seed, glory is the flower: grace is the ring, glory is the sparkling diamond in the ring: grace is the glorious infant, and glory is the perfect man of grace: grace is the spring, glory is the harvest: the soul of man is the cabinet, the grace of God is the jewel: Christ will throw away the cabinet, where he finds not the jewel. He that created us in the image, will restore to us his image. That is the seventh particular.

Eightly, God in Christ is a Father that never dies: other fathers be dead and gone, our father Abraham is dead, our father Isaac is dead, our father Jacob is dead, and others be dead and gone. Oh! But God in Christ is a Father that lives for ever, that loves for ever, that reigns for ever. He is the Father of eternity in eternity, from eternity, to eternity, Prov. viii. He was always, is always, and shall be always, and he cannot

cannot but be always, Rev. i. 8. Christ is the same before time, in time, and after time, Heb. xiii. 8. 'Jesus Christ is the same, saith the apostle, yesterday, and to day, and for ever. Of him and for him, and to him, are all things,' Rom. xi. 36.

Ninthly, God in Christ is a Father that correcteth his children; all whom God loves he chastiseth, though he loves not to chastise, God had one Son without sin, but no son without sorrow: he had one Son without corruption, but no son without correction. Heb. xii. 16. 'For whom the Lord loves, he chastiseth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. Rev. iii. 19. As many as I love I rebuke and chasten. Afflictions are blessings to us, when we can bless God for the afflictions. Christ tells us, 'That he that will be his disciple, must deny himself, take up his cross and follow him.' Mat. xvi. 24. There is a four fold self, that must be denied for Jesus Christ, or else we cannot be called his disciples.

First. A sinful-self. (2.) A natural-self. (3.) A self-righteousness. And (4.) A self-gain of lucre.

Sinful-self is to be destroyed, and natural-self is to be denied; we cannot enjoy ourselves till we deny ourselves: God is as far from beating his children for nothing, as he is from beating his children to nothing.

The Application. Is it so, that God in Christ is a believer's everlasting Father? Oh then, what is so sweet a good as Christ? And what is so great an evil as sin? Oh! love Christ more, and hate sin more: Christ bringeth life with him, a life of grace, a life of comfort, a life of glory; but sin bringeth death with it, death of body, death of soul, death here, and death hereafter. O the blood of Christ speaketh better things than the blood of Abel: Abel's blood cried for vengeance, but Christ's blood cried for mercy. He is the pearl of great price, for which the rich merchant sold all that he had; and bought it, and found more joy in this pearl, than ever he did with all that he had. Oh! therefore let me beseech you that are his children to love him, and to serve him:

is your everlasting Father, therefore do his will on earth, as the angels do in heaven, you cannot complain to him for want of mercy: Oh! let him not complain of you for want of duty; so good hath been to you, as he hath not been wanting to you in any thing, and will you be wanting to him in every thing?

'A son honoureth his father, and a servant his master: If I then be a Father, where is my honour? If Master, where is my fear?' Mal. i. 6. As a Father, he will be revered for his goodness. Oh! what that little he desireth of you, to that which he desireth from you? If honour be not due to him, let it not be bestowed, if it be due to him, let it not be denied. If God do great things for his children, he will not accept of small things from his children. Do not see the out-cry that God makes against his own children, Isa. i. 2. 'Hear, O heavens! and be astonished, O earth. What is the matter? I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me.' The nearer the relation, the greater the obligation. Christ is related to them as a lord to his servants, as a father to his children, as a prince to his subjects, as a head to his members, where the relation is nearest, there the provocation is greatest. It is a more pleasing thing to see rebels to become children, than it is to see children to become rebels.

What mother can endure to see those lips that drew her breasts, to suck her blood? Oh, Christians, you are more known to God than others: and therefore you must more acknowledge him than others; you do not look for so much splendor from the burning of a candle, as from the shining of the sun: Nor so much moisture from the dropping of a bucket, as from the dissolving of a cloud. 'To whom much is given, of him much shall be required.' God doth not expect much where little is bestowed, nor accept little where much is received. 'Hear ye the word of the Lord, O children of Israel, you only have I known above all the families of the earth,' Amos iii. 1, 2. God hath exalted

exalted you above others, and therefore you must love more for God than others. It was a great blessing to Hezekiah, that his returnings was not answerable to his receivings. Oh believers, let me beseech you to do much, to love much, to give much, to receive much, seeing you have received much.

I shall wind up all with a word of comfort to the children of God. Oh, sirs, God in Christ is your Father, your loving Father, your everlasting Father, and you are his children; therefore fear not, it will go well with you, here and hereafter, Luke ii. 'Fear not little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. He will with you, and do with you all good things.' Psal. lxxxiv. 11. He will bestow grace and glory unto you, grace as the silver cord, that draws the golden link of glory after it.

THE PRINCE OF PEACE

CANT. v. 16. He is altogether lovely.

Doctrine. That Jesus Christ is infinitely and superlatively lovely.

Wherever Christ is a Priest for redemption, he is a King for dominion; wherever he is a Saviour, there he is a ruler; where he is a fountain of happiness, there he is a fountain of holiness; where he is a Redeemer, there he is a refiner; wherever he takes a burden from off the creatures back, there he lays a yoke upon the creature's neck. 'The Lord is our Judge, the Lord is our Law-giver, the Lord is our King, he will save us,' Isa. xxxiii. 22.

I shall now proceed to the fifth title of Jesus Christ, which is the Prince of peace, this you have in Isa. lvi. It is the happiness of the church of God, that though they cannot give peace, yet they may get peace; though they cannot settle it on earth, yet they may receive it from heaven: peace is the well-being of all the enjoyments; all other mercies suck their liveliness at the breast of peace: it is the mother of all pro-

ay; as the life of old Jacob was wrapt up in the life of the lad Benjamin, so is all happiness wrapt up in peace: it is the felicity of the saints on earth, and the glory of the angels in heaven. When the old Hebrews wisht any happiness to any one, they only used this expression, 'Peace be unto you.'

From this title of Christ, I shall lay down two propositions, First, That Zion's King is a peaceable King.

Secondly, That the Lord Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace, is the cause and foundation of a believer's peace.

Doctrine. These two points ly fall in the words: But I shall only speak of the latter, to wit, That Jesus Christ the Prince of peace is the cause and foundation of a believer's peace.

In the proposition of it, I shall shew you four things.

First, He is the peace-bringer. (2.) The peace-maker. (3.) The peace-giver. And (4.) He is the Prince of peace, or the peaceable Prince.

First, Jesus Christ is the peace-bringer, he brought in everlasting peace by righteousness, and not by a sword, Luke iv. 14. 'Peace on earth, and good will towards men.' Why was the bread of life anhungred, but that he might feed the hungry with the bread of life! Why was Rest itself weary, but to give the weary rest? Why was the Prince of peace in trouble, but that the troubled might have peace? None but the image of God could restore us to God's image: none but the beloved of God could make us beloved to God; none but the natural Son could make us sons, none but the wisdom of God could make us wise; none but the Prince of peace could bring the God of peace, and the peace of God to poor sinners, and therefore he is called, 'our peace,' Eph. ii. 14.

Oh! What is so sweet a good as Christ? and what a great an evil as sin? The former brings us to joy and peace, the latter brings us to woe and misery. This is the first.

Secondly, He is the Peace-maker, as well as the

Peace bringer, he is the Peace-maker between God and men: sin is the great make-hate between God and the soul: sin is the wall of separation between God and us, but the Prince of peace makes peace between God and us. He paid all the debts, and took up all the controversies, and blotted out the handwriting, and hath broken down the partition-wall, and made up the great breach between God and man. 2 Cor. v. 19. 'God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself.' Mark, it is in Christ; so likewise elsewhere. 'You who were sometimes afar off, he made nigh by the blood of Christ.' Oh, sinners, Christ is our Peace-maker, the Prince of peace makes peace between God and us, he reconciles God to men, and men to God; so that tho' God might be justly displeased with us, yet in his Son he is well-pleased with us, is more pleased with a believer for Christ's sake, than he was displeased with him for his sins sake.

Thirdly, Jesus Christ is the Peace-giver; alas poor sinners! we have no peace with angels, no peace with our conscience, nor one with another, till the Prince of peace give it to us, 'Peace I leave with you, peace I give unto you,' said our Lord to his disciples, John xiv. 27. Oh, sirs! He gives peace with God. In Rom. v. 1. 'We have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:' Christ gives the peace to us, which the world cannot take from us, worldly troubles cannot overcome heavenly peace.

Fourthly, He is a Prince of peace, or the peaceable Prince: So he is stiled not only peace, but the Prince of Peace. Indeed, beloved, he is all peace to the believer. 'Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace,' speaking of Christ, Prov. iii. 17. Mark, 'all her paths are peace.'

Now what these paths are, I shall name six to you. First, The path of repentance. (2.) Of faith. (3.) Of truth. (4.) Of self denial. (5.) Of obedience. (6.) Of holiness.

These are several paths of peace, and peaceable paths, Oh, sirs! there is no peace to be found, but

God the paths of peace. As all his works be great and marvellous, so all his paths are peace and pleasantness. Secondly, His gospel is a gospel of peace; it is a great mercy to enjoy the gospel of peace, but a greater mercy to enjoy the peace of the gospel.

Thirdly, His reward is peace, Isa. lvii. 2. He shall enter into peace. Here the joys of heaven are called peace: the true sons of peace, and the peaceable sons of truth shall be crowned with peace, they shall enter into peace: and thus, beloved, I have briefly, yea, I shall fully prove the point. That Jesus Christ is the cause and foundation of a believer's peace.

Use. Now for the application of the point, I shall reduce it to four heads: (1.) For Information. (2.) For Examination. (3.) For Exhortation. (4.) For Consolation.

First, By way of information, here we may see what great need we stand in of Jesus Christ. O Christians! is Jesus Christ the cause and foundation of all our peace? Then we have no right or title to peace without by the Prince of peace. 'We have peace with God, (saith the apostle) through our Lord Jesus Christ: we are reconciled to God in Christ Jesus, and we who were afar off (saith Paul) are made near by the blood of Christ, we are only acceptable in the beginning.' So that beloved, it is all in Christ, and through Christ that we have our peace. A Christless man is a peaceless man; he hath no peace with God, no peace with angels, no peace with conscience: Till we be Christ's friends, we are our own foes. It is true a wicked man may speak peace to himself, but God speaks not a jot of peace to him: He may speak peace to himself, till he falleth into everlasting flames: God is his enemy, the devil is his foe; angels hate him, all creatures cry for vengeance upon him in Isa. lviii. 21. (3.) There is no peace to the wicked, saith my God; not a word, not a dram of peace to a person who is out of Christ: therefore, Oh sirs! consider in what stand ye stand of the Prince of peace.

Secondly, It informs us, That to have peace with

our Creator and Maker, is the sweetest and best thing in the world. Oh! how infinitely sweet is peace: what is sweeter than peace? Alas! gold is but dust, pleasures are but toys, wit is but a flash; beauty but a blast, honour but a rattle, life but a vapour: Oh! but peace is sweeter than the sweetest, and better than the best of all those.

First, Because he that hath peace with God, may come boldly to God, Heb. vi. 6. Secondly, He that hath peace with God hath communion and fellowship with God. 1 John i. 2. 'Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with the Son Jesus Christ.' Thirdly, He that is at peace with God, is a son of God; peace is of all other the most sweet. Oh! it is wine to comfort us, and bread to nourish us, it makes a man live comfortably, and die cheerfully.

Thirdly, If Jesus Christ, the Prince of peace, be the cause and foundation of all our peace: Why then, he that wants the Prince of peace, wants all good things: he is the most miserable man in the world, that is without Christ: he wants reconciliation with God, an interest in Christ: he wants the feeling and comforting of the Spirit, he wants justification, sanctification, and adoption, he wants pardon of sin and freedom from the dominion of sin, he wants that favour which is better than life, that joy which is unspeakable, and full of glory, and that faith a dram of which is more worth than a king's ransom; he wants those riches which perish not, those evidences for heaven that fail not, that love which dies not, that kingdom which shake not. O beloved! how many things doth that poor soul want, which wanteth a Christ? 'He is wretched and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked,' Rom. iii. 17. Christ is a pearl, whosoever hath him can never be poor, and whosoever wants him, can never be rich: did men but see all in this Pearl of price, they would sell all for this Pearl of price.

Fourthly, If Jesus Christ be the cause and foundation of our peace; then it is our greatest concernment to get into favour with the Prince of peace: many see

the ruler's favour (saith the scripture) but Oh! seek ye the favour of this Prince, poor souls without him there is no mercy, no peace, no grace, no glory, no heaven, no crown, no eternal life; 'For this is eternal life, to know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent,' John xvii. 3.

Use 2. By way of examination, and self-trial, the trial of ourselves is the ready way to the knowledge of ourselves. Oh! Christians, would you see your God? Then cast your eyes upwards, would you see yourselves? Then cast your eyes inwards. Contemplation is a glass to see your God in. It is of greater concernment to know the estate of your hearts: than to know the estate of the kingdom. And therefore I beseech you, examine yourselves, that you may know yourselves; that you may know whose you are while you live, and whither you will go when you die, and what will become of you to all eternity. Oh, sirs? bring yourselves to the trial, and try yourselves, and see whether you be in the faith, and the faith in you, faith is such a grace that a man cannot be saved without it, and not a man can be damned that hath it.

Oh! see whether you be in the narrow way that leadeth to life, or in the broad way that leadeth to death; whether your hearts be chairs for vice to sit on, or thrones for grace to rule in: whether ye are one of Christ's spoules, or the devil's harlots; whether you are heirs of heaven or hell, whether ye be Satan's bond-men, or God's free-men: Examination is the beaten path to perfection, 1 Cor. i. 26. 'Not many wise, not many mighty, not many noble are called.' It is seldom that the sparkling diamond of a great estate, is set in the gold-rings of a gracious heart. A man may be great with Saul, and graceless; rich with Dives, and miserable; the richest is oftentimes the poorest, and the poorest are oftentimes the richest: Oh! how many threed-bare souls may there be found under silken coats, and purple robes? They who live most downward, die most upward: a sight of ourselves in grace, will certainly

bring us to a sight of ourselves in glory; those sins shall never make a hell for us, that have been a hell to us.

Use 3. But it is time for me to turn my speech into an exhortation; and Oh! that you would encourage me with your resolution to obey my message this day; that is, to make your peace with the Prince of peace, that you may be the true sons of peace, and the peaceable sons of truth, that you may be righteous before God, and holy before men, that you may gloriously shine in glory, and that you may have peace with God, and with angels, and with your own consciences, and with one another. Well first, what say you in answer to the message? Shall the Prince of peace be your love and Lord, your nearest and dearest, your joy and your delight? Will you kiss the Son, will you make your peace with the God of peace, and give up your souls and lives to be ruled by him? These things I exhort you to do, and God expects them at your hand, but that the exhortation may stay with you, I shall back it with some pressing considerations.

First, Consider God's goodness and good will towards men; God hath given you rich means, that you may make and secure your peace with God. First, He hath given you the law and the gospel. Secondly, He hath graciously given time and opportunity. Thirdly, Mercies and afflictions, mercies to draw you, and afflictions to drive you. Fourthly, He hath given you preachers, both inward and outward preachers; by outward preachers, I mean the ministers of Christ, who beseech you and intreat you, for Christ's sake to be reconciled to God, and make your peace with God: By inward preachers, I mean your own conscience that judgeth you, and checketh you, and reproveth you for your sins and abominations. Fifthly, He hath given you precepts and promises: precepts commanding you to do, and promises assuring you of a glorious reward for your doing. Sixthly, The Spirit and convictions, Gen. vi. 33. 'My Spirit shall not always strive with man.' Oh, how long

you stand out against God? What have you to say against this? How can you answer this, when you and I shall appear before God's judgment-seat? Have you any thing to say against this? Oh, sad will be your end, unless you make your peace with God; and therefore seeing God has given these things to you, that you may make and secure your peace with him, he that liveth in sin without repentance, shall die in sin without forgiveness. This is the first.

Secondly, God inviteth and woeth you to come and make your peace with him, Isa. lvii. 1. 'Ho every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money, come ye, buy and eat, come and buy wine and milk, without money, and without price.'

Beloved, here is three comes in this text, to show the infinite willingness in God to save poor sinners; so in Rev. xxii. 17. 'The bride and the Spirit say come, and let him that heareth say come. And him that is athirst, let him come, (here is three comes again in this text) and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.' What are there none thirsty among you? Do none thirst for Christ, and grace, and heaven? If you come first, here you may have grace, and mercy and happiness. Now, for the Lord's sake, consider wherefore is this, but that you may make your peace with God? Shall the God of heaven call, and will you not hear? What, will you rather stay in your sins and die, than go to Christ for life? Oh! first, go to the Prince of peace for peace, that you may have peace: if you do not lay your sins to your hearts, that you may be humbled for them, God will lay them to your charge, that you may be damned for them.

A third consideration is this, either you must taste of God's goodness, or of his fury; there is not a man, woman, or child among you, but must partake of the one or the others; your portion will be either joy or sorrow, either desolation, or consolation, if you be not trees for bearing, you must be trees for burning; if you are not for fruit, you must be for the flames, if you

do not swim in the water works of repentance, you shall burn in the fire works of vengeance: if you do not go and make your peace with God that you may have heaven, you shall go to hell, for not making your peace; one of them you must do. Oh sirs! I have set life and death, heaven and hell, bitter and sweet before you this day, will you make your peace with God or no? Will you still go on in a way of wickedness, breaking his laws, grieving his Spirit? Will you die a natural death before you live a spiritual life? I say then, if you live so, and die so, you shall be damned with the damned, and punished with the punishment of hell, and so sent to hell with loads of wrath upon your backs. 'You shall have your portion that lake that burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death. He that believeth, shall be saved, and he that believeth not, shall be damned,' saith our Lord, Mark xvi. 16. Oh, sirs! it is better to repent without perishing, than to perish without repenting, and therefore look to it as well as you will; are you able to deal with God? Alas, alas, all the world is but like a drop of water in comparison of God: and therefore make your peace with him, Heb. ii. 3. 'How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation.'

Fourthly, Consider, what the damned in hell would give for the offers of mercy that are now offered to you, certainly they would give ten thousand worlds if they had them, for these opportunities that you enjoy. Should God say to poor wretches that are suffering in hell, for their drunkenness upon earth, and their whoring and abominations, as he doth to us, 'Come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest?' O! how earnestly would they run and catch the word out of God's mouth? O beloved, the devils are too well acquainted with misery, to put by mercy if it were offered to them. But alas, alas, poor damned wretches, there is no dram of mercy for them, no, not so much as a drop of water for them, not one drop of water to cool their flaming tongues. Oh! that you would consider this, and make

you

your peace with God before death comes; which may be the next night for ought we know, if ye lose your golden season ye lose your souls. O! therefore make your peace with God, that it may not be said of you, as it was once said of Jerusalem in Luke xix. 42. 'Oh, that thou hadst known in this thy day, the things that concern thy peace: but now they are hid from thine eyes.' Here was a weeping word, a sad word to Jerusalem. Alas! now it is hid from their eyes, their golden season is gone, there is no peace to be had: and therefore I beg of you, as tho' I were condemned, and begging of my life, so I beg of you in the bowels of Christ, and for your souls sake make your peace with God.

Fifthly, Seriously consider the multitude of sins thou hast been guilty of, even more than the hairs of thy head, or the sand by the sea shore, or the stars in the heaven, which are innumerable, saith David, 'They are more than the hairs of my head,' Psalm xl. 12. Alas! one of these sins were enough to sink thee into hell for ever: What advantage doth Dives reap in hell of all these delicate banquets that he had on earth? O! think on that time, wherein ye shall be ashamed of nothing but your wickedness, and glory in nothing but your holiness.

Sin is like a serpent in the bosom that is stinging, or like a thief in the closet that is stealing, or like a poison in the stomach, that is poisoning, or like a sword in the bowels, that is killing; some are in hell already for the same sin thou livest in, and if thou livest and diest without Christ, thou shalt ere long be with them, therefore I say make peace with God.

Sixthly, Consider that there is more bitterness following upon sins ending, than ever there was sweetness flowing from sins acting; you that see nothing but well in its commission, will suffer nothing but woe in its conclusion; it is better here to forgo the pleasures of sin than hereafter to undergo the pain of sin: you that sin for your profit, will never profit by your sins: he that likes the works of sin to do them, will never like the wages of sin to have them; sin is both

shameful and damnable, it shameth men in this world, and damneth them in other world; it is like Judas, that at first salutes, but at last betrays us; or like Delilah, to smile in our face, and betray us into our enemies hands. Oh, sinners! think of this, and part with your sins, that you may meet with your Saviour, and make you peace with him.

Seventhly, Consider the heavy judgments that hang over your heads. You ly open to all the judgments in this life, and torments in the life to come. Oh, you sinners the day is hastning upon you, wherein you will have misery without mercy, sorrow without succour, pain without ease, punishment without pity, and torment without end, unless repentance do prevent. 2 Thess. i. 7, 8, 9. 'The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power. Oh! let the hearing of this prevent the feeling of this, poor sinner,

Eightly and lastly, If none of the former arguments or considerations prevail with you, to make your peace with the Prince of peace, yet let this one I beseech you, and that is, the readiness and willingness of God to give Christ, and Christ to give himself to you. Oh, sinners, God is willing to give his Son, and are you not willing to receive his Son? Consider the willingness of God. 'Behold I stand at the door and knock, if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in unto him, and will sup with him.' Mark, sinners here, 'Behold I stand:' What I that have heaven to give; I that have a crown to give; that have all joys to give; I that have myself to give, 'I stand and knock:' Do you see this poor sinners? who it is that stands at the door of your hearts and knocks? Why, it is the King of saints, Prince of peace, the mighty God: and will you not open to him? What are you unwilling to be saved.

to go to heaven, and to be happy for ever? What, are you unwilling to be delivered from Satan, from sin, and from the flames of hell? If you be willing, then make your peace with God, for God is willing to open heaven for you, if you be willing to open your hearts to him: he is willing to save you, if you be but willing to be saved; he is willing to give a Christ, if you be willing to receive a Christ: And therefore, poor souls, let these considerations provoke you to go for life to the Lord of life, to go for peace to the Prince of peace, to go for grace to the God of grace: Were men so diligent as to do their best, God is so indulgent he would forgive the worst.

THE ELECT PRECIOUS.

CANT. v. 16. He is altogether lovely.

Doctrine. That Jesus Christ is infinitely and superlatively lovely.

WHO can be weary of preaching, or hearing, or reading, or learning Christ? Who is so precious and lovely? Mahomet is the Turks love; Moses is the Jews love; the Pope is the Papist's love; but Christ is a Believer's love.

I shall now make some entrance upon Christ's sixth famous and lovely title, The Elect precious; this you have in 1 Pet. ii. 6.

From this excellent title, I shall lay down two propositions.

Doctrine (1.) That Jesus Christ the Mediator is God the Father's Elect. I pray mark, first, there is a three-fold elect of God.

First, The Elect Jesus Christ. Isa. xlii. 1. 'Behold my servant, my elect,' saith the Father, speaking of Christ.

Secondly, The elect angels, 1 Tim. v. 21. 'I charge thee before God, and our Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels.'

Thirdly, The elect saints, and for this see Col. iii.

12. 'Put on therefore (as the elect of God, holy and beloved bowels of mercy.'

But alas! what are elect angels, or the elect saints, to the elect precious? It is only blessed Jesus that is the elect precious, and precious to the elect.

But I shall not stand upon this point but proceed to the second.

Doctrine (2.) And that is this, That a crucified and glorified Christ, is very precious to all believing saints.

In handling this precious point: I shall show you five things, (1.) That he is precious (2.) That he is most precious. (3.) He is all precious. (4.) He is always precious. And (5. Why he is so precious.

First, That he is precious: Jesus Christ is precious three ways; to God, to angels, and to saints.

First, To God the Father, and this will appear by what God the Father hath said himself of the Son, Isa. xlii. 1. 'My elect in whom my soul delighteth: Here you see, Christians, what God saith to Christ: the soul of God delights in the Son of God. So again Matth. iii. 17. 'This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.' Mark here, not only pleased, but well pleased. O how precious is Christ to God the Father?

The Lord Jesus tho' he was a man of sorrows yet he was not a man for sin; he had correction, but not corruption. He that was a way to others, never went out of the way himself. Jesus Christ must needs be precious to the Father, because he never displeased him in any thing, but pleased him in every thing, Job viii. 29. Christ there speaking of himself, I do always the things that please him, saith our Lord Jesus. Oh friends, it will be your glory, your crown, your honour and happiness another day, if in this day you do these things that please God; so did Christ here. I do always those things that please him. Christ went about doing good, he must needs please the Father; for he went about doing good, Acts x. 38. He did not always stay in one place, but went about doing good.

And truly, sirs, if people were not made better by his coming they may thank themselves, 'For he went about doing good.' As he was never ill employed, he was never unemployed; as he opened the scriptures to our understanding, so he opened our understanding to the scriptures. That is the first.

Secondly, He is very precious to the angels as well as to the Father: the angels were very joyful at the birth of Christ their Lord: they sang praises to God on high, Luke ii. 13, 14. See with what joy and triumph the angels sang at the birth of Christ: Oh, how precious is Christ to the elect angels? The angels adore him, let all the angels of God worship him, Heb. i. 6. The Lord of hosts is worshipped by an host of angels: 'Let all the angels of God worship him.' The angels desire to pry into the mysteries of the gospel of grace, as you may see, 1 Pet. i. 2. The angels though they are glorious to all eternity, look upon it as not below them, to pry into Christ's mystery. Oh, sirs, the angels are desirous to know these things, which we neglect to know.

Thirdly, The angels stand before him as waiting men to serve God, and to serve such as are God's; when he bids them go, they go, come, and they come; do this, and they do it: they do all his commands, Psalm ciii. 20. Jesus Christ is the Creator of angels, the Lord of angels, the Prince of angels, the Head of angels. Col. i. 16. The Son of God is very precious to the angels of God. Do you see, sirs, how precious Christ is to the angels of God? And well he may, for indeed he is a precious jewel in the cabinet of glory.

Fourthly, Jesus Christ is precious to the saints, as well as to the Father and angels, 1 Pet. ii. 7. You have here a full text to this purpose, 'Unto you therefore which believe, he is precious.' Mark here, unto you, What you? To you therefore which believe he is precious, he is precious indeed to them that believe, and no wonder: he is a believer's all: now that which is his all must needs be precious: Christ is his all, he is

is all that he hath, he is all that he enjoys: Christ is all that he is worth, he is all that they are, they are no such thing without him, they have nothing without him: whatever they are worth. It is he that makes them worth it; it is not worth a man's while to live, unless he live in Christ; Christ is the gain of a believer, living and dying, so whatever is good for a believer, he must say, for this I am beholden to Christ. said he, all things are yours, and ye are Christ's.

Now first, let me give you a more particular account of the Christian's worth, and inventory of his estate, and all along I shall show you that Christ is the worth of all that, what is it that makes a believer so precious and excellent? Why it is such things as these, (1.) He is a living man. (2.) He is a seeing man. (3.) He is a person of honour. (4.) He hath a great deal of joys, hope of more. (5.) He is righteous and holy, and in a word, he is saved at last.

These are things that make a Christian so excellent a person, and he hath none of these but by Christ, and he hath all this alone by Christ.

First, This is the excellency of a Christian, that he is a living man: there is no man on earth can in a spiritual sense, be called a living man, but a believer: all men be dead men, but they that believe. You know that it was said of the prodigal, while he lived in his sin he was dead, 'This is my son that was dead and is now alive;' when he believed then he was alive. Now first as it is in the things of nature; life is the most valuable thing which we have, 'Skin for skin, and all that a man has will he give for his life.' A man will rather part with his livelihood, than with his life, because his life is so dear to him. Now beloved, if natural life be so desirable a thing, what is a spiritual life that which in scripture is called the life of God? Now the believer is the only living man, every other man is spiritually dead: but now how comes the believer to life? By whom doth he live? Why, it is in Christ Jesus, Gal. ii. 20. I am crucified with Christ, notwithstanding I live. What? crucified and yet live? Yes,

Christ

Christ was crucified and yet lives: and so did Paul in resemblance and conformity to Christ. 'I live (saith he) yet not I, but Christ liveth in me, and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God.' So that Paul will not call his life his own, but only as he deriveth it from Christ: Christ liveth in him, more than he himself liveth.

Secondly, The excellency of a believer lies in this, that he is the seeing man; it is the light which put the difference between person and person: it is a sad thing to be born blind, or to be blind after a man is born. Now all men are either born blind, or blinded after they are born, or both. Now beloved, would you know how precious sight is? Ask a blind man who once could see. We read of a poor man who comes running to Christ, and cries out, 'O Lord, that I may receive my sight.' Now sirs, if in nature having the light of our eyes be a thing that makes us so much more excellent than otherwise we would be without it. Oh, then, how much value should we put upon this spiritual light which refers to our souls? We can much better want the eyes in our heads, than the eyes of our understanding: Now in a spiritual sense there is no seeing man but a believer; no man saw Christ savingly, but they who saw him believingly: every man but a believer walks in darkness: nay, he is darkness. The apostle, Eph. v. 8, tells somewhat to this purpose. 'You were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord.'

In the Lord Jesus Christ, you see a believer doth see, and how he comes to see, it is in the Lord that he sees; he was as dark as others, and as blind as others, till he was in the Lord, and no sooner was he in the Lord, but he was light in the Lord. That is the second.

Thirdly, The excellency of a believer lies in this, that he is a very beautiful and honourable person. Now beauty and honour be the taking ravishing things of this world, now all but believers be deformed persons, there is no beauty nor comeliness why they should be desired: but now the believer is a very lovely beautiful

tiful person, he is so in the eyes of God, Ezek. xvi. 13, 14. 'And I put a jewel on thy forehead, and ear-rings in thy ears: And so he goes on, and saith, 'Thou wast exceeding beautiful, and didst prosper in a kingdom.' But, now mark how he came by this beauty in the next verse, 'And thy renown went forth among the Heathens for thy beauty; for it was perfect thro' the comeliness which I put upon thee, saith the Lord God.' She was not only beautiful in the eyes of the Lord, but she had her beauty also from the Lord, as they are thus lovely and taking in the eyes of God, so also of good angels, and saints too: for as glorious a place heaven is, the angels think it not below them to wait upon the images and pictures of Christ here below, that is, to wait upon believers, and to be the Lord's guardians here upon earth, Heb. i. 14. 'Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?' But this is not all they do for them, they will not leave them when they die, but take the lovely souls and transport them to a better country, than ever this world was to them: for it is no paradox to say this, that there is no believer goes to heaven, but he goes in the arms of angels, Luke xvi. 12. In the parabolic history of Dives and Lazarus, saith the text, Lazarus died, believing Lazarus died, and his soul was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom, that is, to heaven. O what an hour have believers to the death, that the very angels transport their souls to heaven: and they are also very lovely and honourable in the eyes of all good men; the truth is, there is scarce any man fit company for believers, but believers, and therefore saith the apostle, 'Be not unequally yoked.' Believers with unbelievers;

Now good men be much taken up with a believer, tho' he be a stranger to them on all accounts. They are very fond one of another in this world, and rather suffer together, than live with other men. Now this makes a believer so excellent, that he is thus beautiful and honourable in the eyes of God

and good angels, and good men. Now all this beauty and honour they have from Christ, see the text before quoted, to you who believe, he is an honour, so the word may be read: it is Christ that makes them honourable in the eyes of God, and in the eyes of good angels and good men; and all that beauty and honour they have, it is through Christ, he is their worth in every capacity.

Fourthly, That which makes a believer so excellent, that he hath joy, all other men have no joy, but that which is not worth the having: alas! the joy of the hypocrite what is it, but the crackling of thorns under a pot? But now a believer hath a joy that no man intermeddeth with, nor no man partakes of: but now, where hath he that joy? Why, in and from the Lord; 'These things I spake (saith Christ) that my joy may be in you.' They have it from the Lord, they rejoice in the Lord. We rejoice in Christ Jesus saith Paul, and have no confidence in the flesh.

Fifthly, Have they hope? It is from Christ: and indeed none have hope but they; for without God, and without Christ, and without hope are put together in Eph. ii. 12. But now the believer hath good hopes, and this bears him up many times. Alexander thought this so brave a thing, that when he gave this map whole countries and to another vast treasures, and being asked what he would keep for himself, saith he, 'I will keep hope.' For he thought it enough for so brave and great a soul as his, to hope for that which would make him do whatsoever he was able to do, or any one could think. The hopes of mercy and joy, and peace will carry a man thro' thousands of difficulties: now the believer hath this hope, but he hath it from Christ, Col. i. 27. Christ in you the hope of glory.

Sixthly, Are they wise, are they righteous, are they holy, and none so but they? Every sinner is a fool; and therefore in scripture is called by the name of a foolish man; he plays the fool all the time he spends out of the fear of God: all sinning time is a fooling-

fooling-time. Now the believer is a wise man, he is a righteous man, and a holy man, but how comes to be thus now, take an account of it, 1 Cor. i. 30. Pray mark here now, Christ is the all of a believer, 'Of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.'

So that you see if a believer be a wise man, he may thank Christ for it; if he be a righteous man, if he be a holy man he may thank God for it; For he is made unto us, wisdom and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption.

Lastly, In a word they are saved. And indeed this is the complement; ay, the complement of all the rest they are saved; and none are saved but believers. For saith Christ, 'He that believes shall be saved, and he that believes not shall be damned.' The believer is already in a state of salvation, and the unbelieving is in the state of damnation, by nature we are all children of wrath. Now faith in Jesus Christ is the means that God hath appointed to free us from being children of wrath. Now he that believes is past this, he shall not be condemned, he shall be saved, and how comes he to be saved? It is by Christ, by believing in Christ. Oh! who is the Saviour but Christ? to be in Christ is heaven below, and to be with Christ is heaven above: but there is no being with Christ above, if we are not with Christ here below.

Thus you see beloved, whatever it is that makes a believer so excellent and precious, it is Christ that makes him worth all, he hath it all from Christ. Christ is his all in all. Now put all this together and see if there be any great reason that Christ should be precious to believers.

As Jesus Christ is precious, so he is most precious. O sirs! angels are precious, saints are precious, friends are precious, heaven is precious, but a Christ, a Saviour, is ten thousand times more precious than these; a believer had rather have Christ without heaven, than heaven without Christ, 'Whom have I in heaven but thee?

thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides
 thee.' Psal. lxxiii. 25. Let a believer search heaven
 and earth, and yet he will find nothing comparable
 to God. To be like to him it is our happiness; and
 to draw near to him, it is our holiness. You will see
 beloved, life is precious, freedom is precious, health
 is precious, peace is precious, food and raiment is pre-
 cious; gold and silver is precious, parts and gifts are
 precious; jewels and pearls are precious, kingdoms
 and crowns are precious, indeed they are in their pla-
 ces, but nothing in comparison of Jesus Christ. Mark
 says, what the apostle saith. Phil. iii. 8. 'Yea, doubt-
 less, and I count all things but loss for the excellen-
 cy of the knowledge of Jesus Christ our Lord.' I count
 all things loss, nay, that is not all, I count them but
 dung that I may win Christ. What is our life but a
 warfare? and what is the world but a thorow-fare?
 It is only the best of beings that can bestow the best
 of blessings. O how good is a believer's God, that doth
 not only shorten his pilgrimage for him, but sweeten
 his pilgrimage to him! Oh, Christ is a believer's all,
 and therefore he is more Precious than all, he hath
 all in Christ, and nothing out of Christ: there is no
 such thing as a believer is without him. By faith we
 have an interest in Christ, we have an interest in God,
 and by having an interest in God, we have an interest
 in all things; the believer is the only blessed man,
 the only happy man, the only rich man. Rev. xxi. 7.
 'He that overcometh shall inherit all things.' O what
 a glorious inheritance are they born to, that are new
 born? All things are theirs, and they shall inherit all
 things? What can they desire more than all? All that
 Christ hath is theirs, his wisdom is theirs to teach
 them, his love is theirs to pity them, his Spirit is
 theirs to comfort them, his word is theirs to counsel
 them, his mercy is theirs to save them, his angels are
 theirs to guard them, his righteousness is theirs to
 justify them, his power is theirs to protect them, and
 his glory is theirs to crown them. O sirs, Christ can-
 not but be most precious to a believer, because all his
 precious

precious comforts come from Christ. The Lord Jesus is fairer than the fairest, sweeter than the sweetest, nearer than the nearest, and dearer than the dearest, and richer than the richest, and better than the best. The elect precious, is of all the most precious.

First, Because that he is the greatest gift that God can give, or that we can receive, God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son; this more than he had given us all the world: For God had but one Son, and can make no more Sons, but God can make more worlds at his pleasure: this gift is God himself, and God can give us no greater gift than himself, we may say as one said to Cesar, when he gave him a great reward, "This is too great a gift (said he) for me to receive, But it is not too great for me to give, said Cesar."

Secondly, Because he is the richest gift that ever was given; for Christ is all in all: If he hath given us Christ, he will give us all things else, Rom. viii. 32. He is the one thing needful, that brings all things to yea, he is that gift of God, if thou knewest the gift of God, (said our Saviour, John iv. 10.) thou wouldst have asked for it, and begged it of me. Why is Christ called the gift of God, surely God hath given us more gifts than one; true, but as the sun is more worth than all the stars, so that this gift excels them all, according to the proverb. We bless not God for stars when the sun shines, for when the sun shines the stars appear not.

Thirdly, Because he is the chiefest gift that God hath to give; other gifts he gives promiscuously to good and bad, so as no man knoweth love or hatred by any thing that is before him. Eccl. ix. 1. Judas had the bag, and Dives fared deliciously every day, when Lazarus would have been glad of his crumbs, but God never gives this gift to any, but whom he loves with his dearest special and eternal love.

Suppose some prince should woo a great lady, and had a jewel worth a million, it may be he would scatter pieces of silver, or give some slight tokens of fa-

ward unto the servant, but the rich jewel, that he
 gives to his spouse, this jewel is Christ. Abraham
 gave to Ishmael a bottle of milk; but Isaac had
 the inheritance.

Fourthly, The Lord Jesus is the rarest gift of all
 others whatsoever: Christ is a gift given to very few;
 one, and there another; millions of millions
 wish, for not knowing and trusting in Christ; Oh,
 what a rare jewel is Christ! tho' our souls is more
 worth than a world, yet a world of souls is not worth
 Christ; it is he that makes us blessed in life, happy
 in death, and glorious after death.

Fifthly, The Lord Jesus is the sweetest gift of all
 others; for if God gives us Christ then he gives us all
 other gifts in his love; and they come a blessing
 sweetned to us: they that have this good shall want
 no good. 'The young lions do lack and suffer hun-
 ger, but they that seek the Lord shall not want any
 good thing,' Psal. xxxiv. 10. Now put all this toge-
 ther, and you will see Christ to be most precious.

Thirdly, He is altogether precious, I told you the
 last day, that Christ is precious, and indeed I told
 you the truth; for they are not only my sayings,
 but God's sayings; therefore they are true; he is all
 precious: there is nothing in Christ but what is pre-
 cious: he is amiable and desirable; He is fulness
 and sweetness, greatness and goodness, light and life,
 wisdom and knowlege, pleasures and treasures, ho-
 nours and happiness. Believers enjoy all things in
 Christ, and Christ in all things; he is the joy of a
 believer's life, and the life of a believer's joy. O!
 how precious, Christ is precious, Christ is very precious, Christ
 is most precious, Christ is always precious, Christ is
 altogether precious to the believing soul.

First, His name is precious: He is called a precious
 name, Isa. xxviii. 16. Christ is here called a precious
 name. Secondly, His blood is precious, in 1 Pet. i. 9.
 His blood is here called precious blood; ay, and well
 it may; for a drop of his blood is worth a sea of ours,
 and yet he died our death, that he might live his
 life.

life. Thirdly, Faith is precious in 1 Pet. i. 1. Faith is there called a precious Faith, the least grain of faith is more worth than all the gold in Europe. Fourthly, His promises are precious in 2 Pet. i. 4. Given to us exceeding great and precious promises. Christ's promises are called great and precious promises: and Why great, and why precious? They are great in all manner of extent, and precious for their excellencies. Fifthly, His gifts and graces are precious, Prov. iii. 15. 'More precious than rubies?' All things thou canst desire, are not to be compared to them. Sixthly, His members are precious, Isa. xliii. 4. Since thou hast been precious in my sight, thou hast been honourable. Hence you see the members of Christ are called precious.

A believer indeed is a raven in the world's eye, but a dove in Christ's eye: the saints in the world's account, are dung and dirt: but in God's account they are jewels and pearls; graceless men look upon God's people as cast away, but God will give whole kingdoms for their ransom. Wicked men may call the saints factious: but God calls the saints precious indeed. Sirs, the scoffers, the jeerers of the people of God in other ages, were but bunglers to the scoffers and jeerers of the people of God in our age; well, there is a time coming, when Christ will laugh at the ungodly, for now laughing at godliness. The holiness be that which a sinner scorns, yet holiness be that which a Saviour crowns; as you expect happiness from God above, so God expects holiness from you below; therefore be holy as the godly.

Seventhly, The reproaches of Christ are precious, Heb. xi. 26. 'Esteeming the reproaches of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt.' I beseech you mark, it is not here said, that Moses did esteem for the person of Christ, or the members of Christ, or the privileges of Christ, or the glory of Christ, greater riches than the treasures in Egypt, Oh, beloved, the worst of Christ is better than the best in the world, Christ's cross is sweeter than the world's crown: the reproach of Christ, are greater riches than the treasures

Faith in Egypt. 'Esteeming the reproaches of Christ, of far greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: will you leave me leave to tell you that which few believe, and give this, that afflictions be good and precious. Few have this truth, that afflictions are good and precious: and let me tell you, it is a great truth and this shall make appear. Now, beloved, if I can prove the afflictions and reproaches of Christ be good, precious which is the worst of Christ, then you will conclude with me that Christ is all precious. First, That must needs be good that comes from God who is only good: Now afflictions come from God who is the only good, Psal. xxxix. 9. 'I was dumb and closed not my mouth, saith David. Why? Because thou didst it.' I was silent, I did not speak, why? Because thou didst it. Secondly, That must needs be good which was suffered by the sweetest good: now afflictions were endured by Christ who is the sweetest good. 'He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief,' Isa. liii. 3. Thirdly, That must needs be good which fits and prepares us for a glorious estate, the eternal good. 'It is good for me that I was afflicted.' Sirs, you believe king David? Will you believe David a Christian? Will you believe David a saint? Will you believe David a man after his own heart? Why he tells you, 'It was good for me that I was afflicted.' But you will say, Why was it good? look in the 67 verse, and there is the reason. 'For, saith he, before I was afflicted I went astray, and now, a very satisfactory answer: 'and therefore it is good for me that I was afflicted.' So again, in 1 Cor. iv. 17. 'For our light afflictions which are but for a moment, work for us, (what work they?) for the far more exceeding weight of glory.' Do you know what they work for us? Why, a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. O Christians! under your greatest troubles, lieth your greatest treasures; afflictions are good, but not pleasant; sin is pleasant, but not good: but there is more

more evil in a drop of corruption, than there is in a sea of afflictions: God by affliction separates that he hates so deadly, from the soul he loves so dearly: by the greatest affliction: God teacheth us the greatest instruction, and a believer when he lies under that hand that doth afflict him, he lies in that heart that doth affect him; believers are crucified to the world, that they may be crucified to the world: the flesh is an enemy to suffering, because suffering is an enemy to the flesh; it may make a man an earthly comforter, but it never will make a man a heavenly martyr, they that carry not the yoke of Christ upon their necks, will never carry the cross of Christ upon their backs; but a believer studies more how to adorn the cross, than how to avoid the cross. None so courageous as those that are religious. A believer never falls asleep for Jesus, till he falls asleep in Jesus; for glory in that which is their shame, and shall we be ashamed of that which is our glory? It is an honour to be dishonoured for Jesus Christ, tell me, O believer, is not Christ with his cross, better than the world with its crowns. Suppose Christian, the furnace be but seven times hotter, it is but to make them seven times better: fiery trials make golden Christians, sin hath brought many a believer into suffering, and suffering hath kept many a believer out of sinning: they that here are crossed for well-living, shall hereafter be crowned for well-dying, the losing of our heads makes way for receiving of our crowns: God will season our vessels with the waters of affliction before he pours in the wine of glory. By this you see, beloved, that the reproaches of Christ are precious. It is better to be preserved in brine, than to rot in honey.

Fourthly, Jesus Christ is always precious to believers, he is more precious to them than a thousand worlds, because he is always with them in all their trials, and in all their troubles, and in all their straits, and in all their afflictions. 'In all their afflictions I was afflicted,' saith the text. O sirs, who would suffer with such a companion as this? 'When thou

passeth

pasſeſt through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers they ſhall not overflow thee; when thou walkeſt through the fire, thou ſhalt not be burned, neither ſhall the flames kindle upon thee,' iſa. xliii. 2. Do you ſee this, Chriſtians, Chriſt is with you in the fire, in the water, and in the priſon: in all places and at all times: he never, never leaves you, nor forſakes you, Heb. xiii. 5. He beds and boards with you, he lyeth down and riſeth up with you: Jeſus Chriſt is called a friend, and indeed he is our beſt, Cant. v. 16. 'This is my beloved, and this is my friend, O ye daughters of Jeruſalem.'

First, Jeſus Chriſt is a faithful friend. (2.) He is a prudent friend. (3.) A careful or providing friend. (4.) A compassionate friend. (5.) A conſtant friend. (6.) A loving friend. (7.) An everlaſting friend.

He loves us to the end, and there is no end of his love; he that gave his image to us, loves his image in us: Jeſus Chriſt gave himſelf for us, and to us, he loves us himſelf, and as himſelf. Oh, what a ſweet friend is Chriſt? God in giving Chriſt to us, gave his very heart for us. Now, beloved, how can Jeſus Chriſt be but always precious to a believer, who is thus always with a believer.

Fifthly and laſtly, Why is Jeſus Chriſt ſo precious to believers?

First, Becauſe he is a believer's life, Col. iii. 4. 'When Chriſt who is our life ſhall appear, then ſhall we alſo appear with him in glory.'

First, There is a three-fold life that flows from Chriſt; A life of grace, a life of comfort, a life of glory.

Secondly, Jeſus Chriſt is precious to believers, becauſe he is their light. Alas, alas! till we be in Chriſt we be in darkneſs; it is in his light that we ſee light, Eph. v. 12. 'Awake thou that ſleepeſt; and riſe from the dead, and Chriſt ſhall give thee light.'

Thirdly, Chriſt is precious to believers, becauſe he is their food, 'My fleſh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed.' John vi. 55. Oh! what choice fare

have they to feed on; that have Christ to feed on. Oh, soul! whatsoever thou art that hast not Christ to feed on, thy bread is but perishing bread.

Fourthly, Christ is precious to believers, because he is their strength; take a man that is out of Christ, he has no strength to withstand or overcome, without me, (saith Christ) ye can do nothing, John xv. 'When we were without strength, Christ died for us.' To be without Christ, and to be without strength, is all one.

Fifthly, Jesus Christ is precious to believers, because he is their righteousness and holiness.

Sixthly, Jesus Christ is precious to believers, because he is their portion; he is the terror of his enemies, and the portion of his people.

I might in a few particulars anatomize the believer and begin with his head, and shew you all that he knows of the things of God, he is beholden to Christ for it; saith Paul, 'God who hath shined in our hearts by the light of the gospel in the face of Christ.' All the knowledge of God, all gospel light, all the knowledge of spiritual things, we have all from Christ. If we consider the believer in the heart, if we find there a broken heart, a tender heart, a good and honest heart, a new covenant heart; how comes he by this? why, he hath it only from him, in whom the new covenant is made, and that is Christ. Consider the believer in his graces, as faith, and love, and patience, and humility, and the rest, he hath all from Christ. John i. 16. 'Of his fulness have we all received, and grace for grace.' There is not one grace but we have it from Christ. Consider him in his life, he is an honest and just man: Who made him to differ? why he is not so full of cheating tricks as other men; why, he hath not so learned Christ; Christ teacheth him to live at a more holy rate than others do: so that if the believer be better than others in this, he may say, thanks be to Christ for that, before I lived so vainly as others did, but now I have not so learned Christ. Consider the believer in his privileges, he is

son of God, and it is by the Son of God, that he
 the son of God. John i. 12. 'To as many as re-
 ceived him, he gave power to become the sons of
 God, even to them that believe in his name.' So that
 he be the Son of God, he must thank Christ for it:
 with he be one of the family royal, one of the chosen
 generation, he must thank Christ for it; for it is in-
 ded by him alone, that we have all the good which
 we enjoy. Consider him in his comforts; he hath not
 one good day, but it is from Christ. Hath he com-
 fort in ordinances, in the society of saints, and pray-
 er? he must thank Christ for all this.

And thus I have given you a brief anatomy of the
 Christian, and shewed you that Christ is his all in all,
 whatever he is worth, he is beholden to Christ for it.
 Now put all this together, and see what great rea-
 son there is that Christ should be precious to believ-
 ers: and is it any wonder that these souls be ena-
 moreoured so with Christ that they think their lives not
 worth the living, but for him, and in him, and for
 his sake. Oh, sirs, there is a very great reason why
 believers set so great a value and esteem upon Christ,
 who is their all in all.

Application. The first use shall be for examination
 and self-trial. You have heard that Christ is precious,
 precious to God, to angels, to saints: but now, Oh
 soul, is Christ precious to thy soul? If Christ be pre-
 cious to you, then all that which is precious to Christ
 is precious to you.

Oh that men would but deal truly with their own
 souls! Many talk of grace, but few taste of grace:
 every one doth not walk as a Christian, that talks like
 a Christian; many know what is to be done, but never
 do what is to be known: many wear Christ's livery,
 and do the devil's drudgery; many have hands as
 white as wool, and their hearts as black as hell; ma-
 ny think themselves as surely going to heaven, as if
 they were already dwelling in heaven; many think
 they shall go well with them hereafter, because it is so
 well with them here; many ly down with such hopes

in their beds of rest, which they dare not ly down withal in their beds of dust, many appear righteous, who are only righteous in appearance; but such will deceive others with a false shew of holiness, will deceive themselves with a false shew of happiness. Remember Christians, that the sheep coat shall be taken off from the wolves back. If there be nothing done by your souls on earth, there will be nothing done for your souls in heaven: there is no making out our salvation, but by working out our salvation.

God binds up none in the bundles of life, but such who are the heirs of life: there is no living a life that is not virtuous, and then dying a death that is righteous: O therefore examine yourselves, I shall propose four questions to be resolved by your own hearts.

First, What interest have you in him? (2.) What influence have you from him? (3.) What affections bear you to him? (4.) What preparations make you for him?

O Christians, that you would consider well these weighty things! Tell me, O soul, what did Judas get by his deceitful dealings; nothing but a halter, in which his body was hanged, and a fire in which his soul was burned. Tho' the earth may keep a wicked man living, yet heaven will not take a wicked man dying. I say, therefore examine yourselves.

Secondly, I shall speak a little by way of exhortation and conclude. First, If Jesus Christ be so precious, O then open the door of your affections to Christ, that Christ may open the door of salvation to you; Open to the God of glory, that he may make you glorious. Behold the God of heaven stands at the door of your hearts and knocks, Rev. iii. 10. 'Behold I stand at the door and knock, if any man will hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him, and sup with him, and he with me.' He knocks by his word, by his rod, by his Spirit, by his mercies, by his judgments, by your consciences, and all is, that he may come in and sup with you. Now sinners, will you

open the door of your hearts to Christ, that Christ may open the door of heaven to you? If you shut out Christ out of your hearts, he will shut you out of heaven; and what will you get by that? Oh, sirs! he hath gold to enrich you, wine to cheer you, bread to nourish you, righteousness to justify you, mercy to save you, happiness to crown you.

Secondly, Let all that which is precious to God be precious to you. First, The Son of God. (2.) The blood of God. (3.) The day of God. (4.) The ordinances of God. (5.) The ministers of God. (6.) The people of God.

Oh! Let these be precious to you. The people of God are very precious to God: a saint is as glorious in his greatest misery, as a sinner is miserable in his greatest glory. The Lord give a blessing to what hath been delivered.

W O N D E R F U L,

CANT. V. 16. He is altogether lovely.

Doctrine. That Jesus Christ is infinitely and superlatively lovely.

TO be in a state of grace, is to be miserable no more; is to be happy for ever. Faith that unites Christ and sanctified souls together on earth, and love that unites God and glorified souls together in heaven. Oh, believers! you are those worthies of whom the world is not worthy; Jesus Christ from one saint hath more glory given to him, than he receiveth from all the world besides. We owe not only our service to Christ, but we owe also ourselves to Christ.

I shall now make some entrance upon our Lord Jesus Christ's seventh famous title, which is Wonderful, this is one of Jesus Christ's lovely titles in, Isa. ix. 6. He shall be called Wonderful. The point that we shall lay down, and speak to from hence, is this.

Doctrine. That a believer's Saviour is a wonderful Saviour.

He is wonderful in the eyes of all angels and saints for love. The world and devils for fear wonder at him.

For the opening this excellent point, take these particulars. (1.) Christ is wonderful in his nature. (2.) He is wonderful in his person. (3.) He is wonderful in his incarnation. (4.) He is wonderful in his saints. (5.) He is wonderful in his offices. (6.) He is wonderful in his miracles that he wrought. (7.) He is wonderful in his humiliation. (8.) He is wonderful in his conquest. (9.) He is wonderful in his ascension. (10.) He is wonderful in his exaltation. (11.) He is wonderful in his working towards his saints. (12.) He is wonderful in his coming to judgment.

Some have more time than matter, but I have now more matter than time: therefore I must omit much precious matter, for want of precious time. Beloved, I will handle but one of these particulars, and that is the seventh.

That Jesus Christ is wonderful in his humiliation.

This is the head we shall now insist upon, and indeed this is one of the greatest wonders of all, that he who was so high, should be brought so low, that he who was so rich, should become so poor, that the Lord of life should die, and the great God to become a babe, and the eternal Word not able to speak a word, that he who made the law, should be made under the law, He that was more excellent than all the angels, should become less and lower than the angels. O ye angels, how stand ye amazed at this, that the Lord of heaven and earth, should become a servant to his own servants, Phil. ii. 7. 'He took upon him the form of a servant.' This must needs be wonderful to all the angels in heaven.

But to proceed: First, Jesus Christ took upon him our nature. Heb. ii. 6. God could stoop no lower than to become man, and man could be advanced no higher than to be united to God. He that before made man a soul after the image of God, now made himself a body after the image of man. For man to be like to God

a wonder, but for God to be like man, it is a great wonder; but when was it that Jesus Christ took upon him our nature. When it was in innocency, free from all misery and calamity? No, but when it was at the lowest after the fall, when it was most beggarly, when wretched, most bloody, most accursed, most sinful, most feeble. * When we were without strength, Christ died for the ungodly,* saith the apostle, Rom. v. 8.

Now my brethren, that Jesus Christ should take upon him our condition, our frailty, our curse, our nature when it was thus low, thus poor, thus wretched: Oh! this is a wonder of wonders, and yet thus you see did Jesus Christ. Oh, wonderful redemption, must God take upon him our frailty? Had we so far run upon the score of vengeance, that none could satisfy but God himself. Could he not send his angels or saints, but must he come himself in Person? No, no, angels nor saints could not do it: but if Christ will save us, he himself must come and die for us.

Secondly, Our Saviour's humility descended very low, he was born of a poor maid, of no account or reputation: was there never a great lady or gentlewoman in Jerusalem, for this great Prince of heaven and earth, to be born of, but that he must be born of a poor despised virgin! Yea, certainly, there were gentlewomen store in Jerusalem, but our Lord Jesus Christ regarded not the rich more than the poor.

Secondly, He was revealed to poor shepherds, not to emperors and kings, not to rulers and great men, not to doctors and learned men, not to Cesar at Rome. I say, the angels did not go and declare these joyful tidings and good news to Cesar at Rome, but to poor shepherds in the field, Luke ii. 8.

Thirdly, He was born in a stable, Luke ii. 12. Not in a fair house or palace, not in a parlour or chamber; no, but in a stable where horses and beasts are fed.

Fourthly, He was wrapt up in clouts, and laid in a manger, they were no clouts of fine linen, or silks, nor clothes of silver or gold, nor precious robes, but

poor and me.n, like to beggars rags. Now, beloved, put all this together, and tell me what is more wonderful than this? Oh, Humility! Humility? How great is thy riches that are thus commended to us! Thou pleasest men, delightest angels, and confoundest devils, and bringest the Creator to a manger. Oh, sweet Jesus, thou conquerest death by dying.

Thirdly, The third wonder in Christ's humiliation is this, he became poor. That he that was so rich became so poor, that he that was Lord of all, had nothing at all, he that made heaven and earth, had no habitation of his own. He that gave crowns of victory, of life, of glory to others, had no crown himself here, but a crown of thorns: the foxes and the fowls had more than Jesus Christ. Matth. viii. 20. 'The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man had no where to lay his head.' The foxes had holes to lay their heads in, but Christ had not a place to lay his head on. As he was born in another man's house, so he was buried in another man's tomb. 'You know, saith the apostle, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, though he was rich, yet he became poor,' 2 Cor. viii. 9. Yet became he poor, ay, poor indeed, and so poor, that he had not a penny. You will say, that a man is very poor that hath not a penny: truly such a one was Christ, he had not a penny to pay tribute till he got it off a fish, Mat. xvii. 27. And when he was to ride in pomp to Jerusalem, he had no coach, nor chariot, no horse, or beast of his own, he was fain to ride upon another man's ass, Mat. xxi. 2. Oh! Ye blessed saints, admire and wonder at this, is not he the brightness of God, the paradise of angels, the beauty of heaven, the Redeemer of men, the destroyer of death, the King of saints: and that he should become so poor for us? Of this is a wonder to angels and men.

Fourthly, The fourth wonder in Christ's humiliation is this, That he shed his blood sixtimes for poor sinners. And this is a great wonder.

First, The first time was when he was circumcised

ed at eight days old. O what a blessed Jesus is this? What, ready for the sacrifice already? What, but eight days old, and yet shed his blood for the salvation of poor man's soul.

Secondly, The second time was, when he was in his agony, when he was in the garden: Matthew tells us, 'That his soul began to be sorrowful, sore amazed, (saith Mark) Mark xiv. To be troubled, (saith John) John xii. Now my soul is troubled; what shall I say? save me from this hour.' Troubled, O Lord, what? Thou that bindest up the proud waves of the sea, turnest the heart of kings as the rivers of water, thou that laidest the foundation of the earth, and spreadest the heavens as a curtain: thou that guidest the stars, and thunderest in the clouds: thou that upholdest all things by the word of thy power, and what, thou troubled? Oh! the horror, the terror, the sorrow that seized upon the soul of Christ. Saith Luke, he began to be in agony, Luke xxii. 44. 'He began to be in agony, and he swate, what? no natural sweat, but blood.' He was in a bloody sweat all over, he swate clots of blood, as the original hath it.

Oh, how did Christ come swimming to us in blood! and have not we a tear to shed for all these streams of his? We did eat the sower grapes, and his teeth were set on edge, we climbed the tree, and stole the forbidden fruit, and Christ he went up the ladder of the cross and died: Oh, how lovely should Christ be in our eyes! We should wear our crucifix in our hearts, and treasure it up as Moses did the manna in the pot. "Christ's cross (saith one) is the golden key that lets us into paradise, and the angel with the flaming sword is turned out." Had red blood washed away our red sins.

But thirdly, He shed his blood for us, when his cheeks were nipt and torn, the pulling of the hairs as the prophet speaks, Isa. l. verse 6. 'I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that pulled off the hair.' Some be of opinion that Christ's

checks were rent to his very chin; and his beard was pulled off, both very likely to be true; neither of them could be without much blood; for we find that the soldiers did blindfold him, and then smote him on the face, and bad him read who it was that smote, they made sport of it. Luke xxii. 64. O how was that face of his massacred and covered with blood that was brighter than the sun! He that was fairer than the sons of men, he that is the great glittering and sparkling diamond of the ring of glory. How was he bespotted and besmeared with blood? O ye hard of heart, ye stubborn of heart, and indeed too stubborn are we all: if judgment and the hammer will not break your hearts, let love and mercy do it. Look unto Christ, and say, Hast thou suffered this for me, and shall I not love thee, O Lord, and serve thee? and obey thee, and honour thee? So say, and so do, and the Lord say, Amen.

But then fourthly, Christ shed his blood when the crown of pricking thorns was put upon his head. Mat. xxvii. Some of the fathers say that he received seventy two wounds in his head, certainly there could not but much blood come out; Oh, what a sight was this to behold this head of his, that was as the most fine gold, as the spouse expresseth it, to be now covered with thorns, and rent with thorns: that he should wear the prickled crown of sharp thorns, that was fit to wear the crown of glory.

Fifthly, A fifth time when he shed his blood: was when his hands and feet were nailed to the cross, these beautiful feet of his, that came skipping over the mountains, bringing the glad tidings of peace and salvation. "Skipping (Gregory saith) from the throne to the cradle, from the cradle to the grove, and from the cross to the throne again." How were these blessed hands of his, nailed and made fast to the cross? O ye blessed spirits look down from heaven, and you may see even the Almighty kneeling at the feet of men. O ye angels, how should ye be amazed at this, to see your Lord and Master so

deny himself, as to take upon him the form of a servant? 'We saw Jesus, saith the apostle, made a little lower than the angels.' To suffer death, the Creator not only become a creature, but inferior to some of the creatures which he had made. O ye blessed saints, why do ye not wonder at this wonder, to see the beauty of heaven, the paradise of angels, the brightness of his Father's glory, the Redeemer of man, thus to humble and take upon him man's nature, for the salvation of man's soul.

Sixthly and lastly, Christ shed his blood when the spear was thrust into his side, out of which presently gushed out water and blood, John xix. 34. Some say that the soldier that pierced Christ with a spear was a blind man; but our Saviour's blood sprinkling out upon his eyes, restored him to his sight, and he became a convert, a preacher, a martyr. You will say a very strange cure that the physician should bleed, and his blood would be that vertue, that we should all be saved; physicians be usually liberal of other men's blood but sparing of their own: but it was not so with our Physician, instead of the patients bleeding in the arms, he bled in the side, why dost thou shower down thy blood, and come swimming in thy blood? Is not a drop sufficient. One drop saith Luther, is more worth than heaven and earth. O love without measure! O wonderful redemption! That God should take upon him man's frailty, that is wonderful indeed! Is it not enough for a king to pardon a thief, but that the King himself should die for the malefactor, this is beyond expression! This did our blessed Lord, our blessed Saviour. He died that we might live: he went and suffered in his agony, that he might stay us with flacons, and comfort us with apples. He endured the greatest pain, that we might enjoy the greatest pleasures. O how lovely, how lovely was Christ in his sufferings? Who would but love thee, thou King of saints? Christian, consider how much thy dear Lord and Saviour hath suffered and undergone for thee. O precious blood, it redeems us, it cleanseth

seth us, it washeth us, it justifieth us, it sanctifieth us, it restoreth us to God, and bringeth us to heaven.

Fifthly, Another wonder in Christ's humiliation is this he suffered in his soul, Matth. xxvi. 38. 'My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death,' saith Christ. O what a word was this for a God to speak, to say, 'My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death.' For a man to say so, is no great wonder, but for God to say so, O this is a great wonder indeed. The sufferings of his soul were the soul of his sufferings. Christ yielded his soul for our souls, his soul in our souls stead.

Many of the faithful servants have suffered much in their bodies, as the martyrs that were racked, and burnt, and sawn assunder: but they had much freedom in their souls, their souls were full of much spiritual joy and comfort. But now Jesus Christ did not only suffer in his body, but in his soul: and that is it which makes the wonder the greater, that Christ suffered in his soul. He drank the cup of affliction that we might drink the cup of consolation, he tasted death for us, that we might taste life for him: Christ was forsaken, that we might never be forsaken.

A sixth wonder in Christ's humiliation is this, That Jesus Christ should suffer himself to be so much mocked: He was mocked as Sampson was by the Philistines when his eyes were put out: and truly this is a great wonder.

First, If we consider who Christ was. (2.) If we consider who they were that mocked him. Christ he was God, the God man, they were but dust and ashes.

First, They did spit upon him. (2.) They blindfolded him. (3.) They crowned him with thorns. (4.) They put a reed into his hand, instead of a sceptre. (5.) They cloathed him with purple garments. (6.) They bowed their knees to him in scorn. (7.) They saluted him with HAIL KING OF THE JEWS. (8.) They made him carry his own cross on which he was to be hanged, as malefactors with halters about their neck to execution, so they made Christ

carry

carry the cross. (9.) They reviled him wagging their heads. (10.) They crucified him with two thieves, and him in the midst of them, as tho' he had been the prince of thieves, the greatest malefactor of them all. (11.) They insulted over him in his misery. Thus they never left him till his soul left the world: and all this they did in scorn to him, that they might make his death the more painful and shameful: O! Sirs, this is no small wonder, if we consider how Jesus Christ was mocked.

The seventh wonder in the humiliation of Christ was this, he suffered much from his Father: here is a wonder, if you talk of wonders. Jesus Christ did not only suffer from Jews and Gentiles, scribes and pharisees, Judas and Pilate, wicked men and angels, but he suffers too from his Father; and this is that which makes the wonder the greater Isa. liii. 10. 'It pleased the Lord to bruise him, he hath put him to grief,' Mark, one would have thought, if God would spare any it should have been his Son, his own Son, his beloved Son, his begotten Son, his bosom Son, and yet God spared him not a jot, Rom. viii. 22. 'He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all.' Mark here, God did not spare him, but delivered him up for us. If Jesus Christ will come and take our sins upon him, God will not spare him, but let out the fulness of justice, and justice to the full upon him, till he had paid the uttermost farthing of justice. O blessed Jesus, didst thou undergo so much for our sinning for our offending, for our rebelling. O then what infinite cause have we to love thee, and obey thee, and honour thee? For the more he hath done and suffered for us, the dearer he ought to be unto us.

Eightly, The last wonder that I shall mention is this, Christ foresaw all this, and yet he willingly undertook it to save mankind. Christ knew before he came from heaven, how his country-men the Jews would use him, and that one of his family would betray him, John vi. 64, saith the text, 'Jesus knew from

from the beginning, who should betray him: 'nothing was in the womb of time, that was not first in the womb of Christ: He knew it from the beginning, saith the text; now that our Lord Jesus Christ should foreknow all this most wonderful misery that he endured, yet that he should come freely, willingly, and joyfully from heaven to die and suffer by, and for such poor wretches as we are. Here is a wonder for angels and men, Heb. x. 9. 'Lo, I come, (saith Christ) to do thy will, O God, lo, I come.' And what was it he was to do? Why to suffer for poor man, to redeem poor man. Do you see here, first what great love Christ bore to his people, rather than they should be in hell, and be damned. Jesus Christ would come from heaven and suffer all this for them, tho' he knew before how he would be used? O this is a great wonder: dear Christians, methinks such a pearl should sparkle in our eyes: we sail to glory, not in the salt sea of our tears, but in the red sea of Christ's blood. Truly it is wonderful to think how much Jesus Christ did for us, and how little we do for him; the greater his sufferings were, the greater should our love be to him. I shall make of this point an use of information and exhortation.

Use 1. Is it so that a believer's Saviour is a wonderful Saviour? Then it informs us of eight things.

First, My first inference is this. That Christ's sufferings, in what he endured for men in his body, and what he suffered from God in his soul. Christ did not only endure pain in his body, but agony in his soul. Oh, the sea of sufferings, the sea of sorrow, the sea of blood, the sea of tears, that our blessed Saviour waded through, to come and bring peace to our souls, salvation to our souls, grace and glory to our souls. He suffered from God, he suffered from men his friends. He suffered from devils, he suffered in his name, he suffered in his members, he suffered in his body, he suffered in his soul, the cause was our sin, the effect our salvation. If you look thro' the chronicle of his life, you shall find his whole life full

sorrows and misery; he was persecuted, he was tempted, he was reproached, he was falsely accused, he was apprehended, he was betrayed, he was crucified. What shall we say, shall we say more? What can be said more? He was full of sorrow, he took his name from sorrow, the Lord Jesus Christ is called a man of sorrows, Isa. liii. 3. 'A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief:' now judge sirs, whether Christ's life was not full of sorrows, he took his name from sorrow. O sweet Jesus thy sufferings were great. That is my first inference.

Secondly, Jesus Christ suffered by himself, he was alone in his sufferings, neither angels nor saints bore any part with Christ in his sufferings; no, he drank the bitter cup alone, he alone purged our sins, Heb. i. 3. 'He alone, by himself, saith the text, purged our sins.' No, Christ hath none to help to bear his heavy burden with him, he bore it himself alone. But my beloved, tho' our Lord Jesus Christ suffered by himself, yet he did not suffer for himself, he suffered for us, he suffered for that which we deserved, Isa. liii. 4, 5. 'He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed.' Do you see here Christians, how many Ours are here? Our griefs, our sorrows, our transgressions, our iniquities, our peace. You have here five Ours. So again, 'for our sakes he became poor,' 2 Cor. viii. 9. Mark, for our sakes. Beloved he was born for us, 'Unto us a child is born.' He was given for us, 'To us a Son is given,' Isa. ix. 6. 'He was made a curse for us,' Gal. iii. 13. The text tells us, he was made a curse, but it was for us, he was delivered up for us. Rom. viii. 32. 'Who spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all.' O sirs! all these things they were for us, given for us, made a curse for us, made sin for us, delivered up for us, and is now in heaven interceding for us, Heb. vii. 25. So that my brethren, all that our Lord Jesus suffered was not for him.

himself, but it was for us, our blessed Saviour suffered for us, that we might not suffer. This is the second inference.

Thirdly, My third is this, That this is more for Christ to suffer any thing, than for all men and angels to suffer all things. Pray mark, first, if all the kings and emperors should have left their thrones, their crowns, their kingdoms, their sceptres, their glory, their honours, and princely robes; and have come and took upon them a poor Lazarus's condition, to go poorly and fare hardly, and die shamefully: Why, if this had not been so much, as for Jesus Christ the Son of God to suffer the least thing he did suffer. Now further, I say, if all the angels in heaven, and men on earth, had come and suffered, and died ten thousand deaths it had not been so much put all together, as it was to Christ to suffer any thing, because they are creatures, He the Creator; they the servants, He the Master, they are subjects, He the Prince; they are mean, he is mighty; He is a King of kings and Lord of lords. He thought it no robbery to be equal with God, Philip, ii. 6. Now I say, it would not have been half such a wonder, if all the angels in heaven, and men on earth, had come and suffered as it was for the son of God. Oh! this is a wonder of wonders. His sufferings were wonderful, his humiliation was wonderful, his patience was wonderful, his love was wonderful, greater love could none shew; He loved us so that he died for love. Now I beseech you consider this inference, which was this, that it is more for Jesus Christ to suffer any thing, than for all men and angels to suffer all things. And indeed, first, let me tell you, I want words to express it, or set it forth; for there is both want of words, and want of words, to express this matter.

Fourthly, My fourth inference is this, In what a miserable case lay we, that our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ must endure all this, bear all this, undergo all this for poor sinners? In what a miserable case lay we in, think you? Certainly the misery of man was

very

very great, that men should need such redemption as this; Oh! the breach that sin had made between God and us, that the Son of God must come from heaven to earth to suffer all this? Oh! sirs, mischievous sin, I say, mischievous sin had undone us: sin hath robbed every one of six jewels, every one of which jewels are more worth than heaven and earth: would you know what jewels they be that sin has robbed us of? I will tell you, and then you will say with me that we were in a very miserable case.

First, It robs us of the image of God; was not this a precious jewel think you? I say, it robbed us of the image of God, and drew in man the devil's picture, malice is the devil's eye, oppression is the devil's hand, blasphemy is the devil's tongue, and hypocrisy is the devil's cloven foot. 2. Sin robs us of our sonship, and makes us slaves to the devil, slaves to sin, or slaves to the world, and slaves to ourselves; this is another jewel that we have lost. 3. It robs us of our friendship with God, and makes us enemies to God, and enemies to Christ, enemies to our own souls, and enemies to all that is good. 4. It robs us of our communion and fellowship with the Father, Son, and Spirit, and makes us strangers and aliens. 5. It robs us of our rights and privileges of heaven and heavenly things, and makes us children of wrath and heirs of hell. 6. It robs us of our honour and glory, and makes us vile and miserable, as you may see, Isaiah i. 6. 'There is no soundness in it; but wounds and bruises, and putrifying sores.

Now sirs, put all this together, and then, see whether or no we are not miserable, and whether we did not need a Saviour to come and deliver us from this misery, into which our souls were plunged? Now here is our happiness, Christians, in Christ we have these jewels again that were lost in the old Adam, the glorious image of God, our sonship, our friendship, our fellowship, our privilege, and our glory and honour, we have all again by Jesus Christ. O sirs, man was in a very sad condition, man had brought himself

himself into a sad condition, our condition was miserable condition.

A fifth inference is this, Jesus Christ brought to us, but we brought death to him, a life of grace, a life of comfort, a life of glory, Christ brought glory to us, but we brought shame to him; Christ brought riches to us, but we brought poverty to him: He brought joy to us, but we brought sorrow to him, sorrow upon sorrow; we put the crown of thorns upon Christ's head; Christ puts the crown of glory upon our heads: We thought the earth was good for Christ, and would not let him live here, but put him to death: but Christ thinks not heaven good for us: We be ashamed to own Christ before men, but Christ is not ashamed to own us before his Father, and his holy angels; we condemn Christ, but Christ justifies us: O sirs, think of your unkindness to Christ, and let the considerations of his infinite love and favour to you, draw out your affections after him. This is the fifth.

My sixth inference is this, All believers have a exceeding great cause to bless God for Jesus Christ. God the Father gave Christ to us, who were not his friends but enemies; to us who were no sons but slaves; to us who were not angels but men; to us who loved not God but hated him: Oh! have we not cause to bless God for Jesus Christ? In John 3. 16. 'God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life.' O sirs! what a gift is Jesus Christ.

Seventhly, if Jesus Christ be so wonderful? O then how vile a thing, how base a thing it is for the hearts of men to prefer any thing before Jesus Christ. I beseech you; and beg of you all, to mind this inference. Surely, sirs, if Jesus Christ be so wonderful, so precious, so lovely, so rich, so sweet, so rare, then it is a most abominable thing, a wicked thing, a vile thing, to prefer any thing before Jesus Christ. O, I may speak it with grief of heart, there be to

many in the world that set light by Christ, and make nothing of Christ, and love not Christ, and prefer every base lust before Christ, though there is nothing more cursed than this, yet there is nothing more common than this, Christians, for men to prefer the vilest of things before Christ.

First, The wicked worldling, he prefers the trash of this world before Jesus Christ; he can leave hearing, and prayer, and reading, and fasting, to follow the world: he prefers gold before God, earth before heaven, gain before glory, his corruptible silver before his Saviour. Oh, thou wicked worldling, thou wretched worldling, can thy riches save thy soul? Let me ask thee, Can thy riches deliver thee from hell? Can thy riches bring thee to heaven, that thou thus preferrest them before Christ? O! the Lord Jesus will come in flames of fire, to take vengeance on such, and then thou wilt know to thy cost, and pain, and torment, that thy riches cannot keep thee out of hell, much less bring thy soul to heaven, then thou wilt see thy folly when it is too late.

Secondly, Drunkards, wicked drunkards prefer their drunkenness before Christ, the drunkard prefers his pots before Christ, the drunkard wades thro' a sea of drink to his grave: he can sit a day, or a whole night in an ale-house, and think it a little time: but an hour in the service of God, O how tedious is that? O! thou drunkard, that now turnest off thy cups so fast, God almighty has a cup for thee, but not a cup of sack, or a cup of beer, but a cup of wrath, which thou shalt drink to eternity, which is worse than to drink hot scalding lead down thy throat; he bath so much liquor here, not only to drink to quench his thirst, but to drink to excess till he say and do, he knows not what; in hell he shall have little enough, there is never a tavern, or ale-house there; no, there is not a drop of water to be got all hell over, O thou wretch! thou shalt live in burning flames, and thy tongue shall cleave to the roof of thy mouth, and if thou wouldst give a thousand worlds for one drop of water,

water, thou shalt not have it: and therefore, I beseech you, if any such there are here in the name of God, hear, and fear, and do no more wickedly. Oh, I would not be in thy condition, for ten thousand worlds: yet I cannot but have bowels of pity towards thee which constrains me thus to speak, knowing thy condition better than thou dost thyself. Oh! couldst thou but speak with thy fellow drunkards that are now in hell, O what a dreadful story would they tell thee of their burning, and suffering, and pain, and torments, some are in hell already for the same sins that you live in: and if you live and die without Christ, you shall be ere long with them.

Thirdly, The swearer, the blasphemous swearer, prefers his oath before Christ; many can swear to their Creator and Maker, and speak proudly and look highly, and walk contemptuously, as if there was no God to punish, no devil to torment. Well, let me tell thee, O thou swearer! that now delightest in cursing, thou shalt be ere long sent with a curse to a cursed place, 'Depart ye cursed into everlasting flames,' will Christ say to such persons.

Lastly, The proud person prefers his pride before Christ; if a fine suit of clothes did lie on the one hand, and Christ on the other, the proud person would rather put on the suit of clothes than Christ. O I beseech you, sirs, consider what a vile and abominable thing it is to prefer any thing before Christ, 'consider this,' saith the Psalmist, 'ye that forget God, lest he tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver you.' O poor wretch consider of that text, thou liest open to all the judgments in this life, and to all the judgments in the life which is to come, all ye wicked ones that prefer any thing before Christ.

Eightly, The last inference is this, If Jesus Christ be so wonderful? O then, every one that heareth of Christ should think it to be a most dreadful thing to be a sinner, a transgressor, a disobedient child, a disobedient servant, a disobedient wife of Christ.

O Christians and friends! consider of it; certainly that man or woman's condition must needs be sad and

ed that lives and dies without Jesus Christ. O poor
 wretch, the devil looks but for a look from God to
 take and rent thee in pieces and drag thy soul to hell.
 O soul, thy soul is in danger every hour of being
 wrested by death and carried prisoner to hell. O sirs,
 beseech you, do you think and consider with your-
 selves, what a sad thing it is to miss of Christ. Until
 man is in Christ, he hath nothing; he knows no-
 thing, he enjoys nothing, and can do nothing, and is
 worth nothing, and is worth nothing. Prov. x. 20.
 Oh, I beseech you, that you would consider seriously
 that of all miseries that is the greatest of miseries,
 the loss of Christ: we are never able to lament the loss
 of the poor soul that loseth Jesus Christ: all losses be
 wrapped up in that one loss; and therefore I beseech
 you all both good and bad, bethink with yourselves,
 what a sad condition that person is in that misleth of
 Christ. So much for this use of information.

BELIEVER'S Golden CHAIN.

Come now to the second use, and that is an use
 of exhortation: And here I shall make a golden
 chain of twelve links for believers to wear about their
 old necks.

(1.) Hear the best men. (2.) Read the best books.
 (3.) Keep the best company.

First. Hear the best men. O sirs, hear a soul en-
 lightning minister, a soul winning minister, a soul search-
 ing minister, one that declareth the whole counsel of
 God, and gives the father his due, the Son his due,
 the holy Ghost his due; one that maketh hard things
 easy, and dark things plain. Many there are I may
 speak with grief, and to their shame, who instead of
 making hard things easy to the people, make easy
 things hard to the people, plain things dark, speaking
 in an unknown tongue, which the people understood
 not, and all to work a vain admiration of them in the
 ignorant: but how unlike to Christ, and the pro-
 phets,

phets and apostles these are I will leave you to judge; let
 This is, as if a man should make a scaffold as he doth
 as the steeple, when his work is done upon the ground; your
 ministers are fisher-men; now you know if fisher-men
 should wind their nets together, they would catch nothing;
 nothing: but if they would catch the fish, they must
 spread their net. The application is easy; a sanctified
 heart is better than a silver tongue; a heart full of
 grace, is better than a head full of notions: nothing
 knowledge it may make a man's head giddy, but it
 will never make a man's heart holy, that which may
 tickle delicate ears, least helpeth diseased spirits to see
 How are we to speak to God and live, much less
 speak from God to the people that they may live; are
 how holy had they need to be that draw near to
 holy God? Ministers are called angels, because they
 should be as angels in our lives; but if angels fall they
 turn devils. O we should be holy as the holy angels.

It is the foolishness of preaching that saves souls; but
 but not foolish preaching, Christ taught them as they
 were able to hear it, and as they were able to believe
 it, Mark iv. 32. Paul was excellent at this, 'I had
 rather speak five words in a known tongue, than
 thousand words in an unknown tongue, a man may
 be a great scholar and yet a great sinner; Judas the
 traitor, was Judas the preacher: and therefore, first
 let me beseech you, for your souls sake, hear those
 ministers that come nearest to Christ, the prophets
 and apostles, he is the best preacher that doth
 most good, and wins most souls. You may go from
 men to truth, but not from truth to men; for the
 best of men are but men at the best.

(2.) Read the best books, for in them ye will find the
 best things, and compare what is spoken in the book
 of men, with what is written in the book of God.
 (3.) Keep the best company, be much with those
 that are much with God, walk with them that walk
 with God. 'Truly our fellowship is with the Father
 and with the Son Jesus Christ,' 1 John i. 3. For sake
 all bad company, and join thy self with good company.

judg; let them be thy chosen companions, that have
 as be Christ their chosen companion: lay them near-
 rough your hearts, who ly nearest Christ's heart, carry
 er w in your bosom by love, who shall be carried by
 can angels into Abraham's bosom: let Christ's love
 y m your love, with whom shall believer's be, but with
 diff evers? You know what our English proverb is,
 ull rds of a feather will flock together, 'Being let go
 tive y went to their own company, Acts iv. 12. Indeed
 bar e are fit company for a believer, but a believer;
 a m ee a saint and a sinner sociating with one another;
 piri o see the dead and the living keep house toge-
 ess ter; carnal men tho' they be naturally alive, yet
 live y are spiritually dead: it is better to be with La-
 r to us tho' in rags than to be with Dives tho' in
 se es. 'He that walketh with the wise, shall be wise,'
 i the ay. xiii. 20. O dwell where God dwells, make
 ngem your companions on earth, who shall be your
 sou companions in heaven. That is the first.

the ll. Meditate often, think often on the four last
 be ags, death which is most certain, judgment which
 l ha most strict, hell which is most doleful, heaven which
 n to most delightful.

me 1. Meditate upon death, which is most certain, 'It
 s appointed unto men once to die,' Heb. xi. 27. Out
 fine the dust was man formed, and into the dust shall
 ho be turned. To think of death is a death to some
 phe as: but beloved, Meditate upon death: the Me-
 thation of death will put sin to death; death to the
 fro cked is the end of all comfort, and the beginning of
 r the misery; but death to the godly, is the out-let to
 and sorrow, and the in-let to peace and happiness.
 It the saints enjoyments shall be incomparable, when
 ook sinner torments shall be intolerable. When a be-
 1. er's soul goeth out of his own bosom, it goeth in-
 to Abraham's bosom. When a believer dies, he leaves
 his bad behind him, and carries his good with him?
 he as a sinner dies, he carries his bad with him, and
 leaves his good behind him: the one goeth from evil
 to good, the other from good to evil. When a saint
 leaves

leaves the world, his flesh returns to the dust, his spirit returns to rest. When a sinner leaves the world, his body goes to worms to be consumed, his soul goes to flames to be tormented. The good goes to Abraham's bosom, the other to Beelzebub's bosom, the chaff to the fire, and the wheat to the garner. O! for the Lord's sake meditate upon death: When you come into the world, you do but live to die again: when you go out of the world, you do but live again. He that lives well cannot die ill, he is assured of a life that hath no end, cares not when his life is at an end: but he that lives with fear shall die without hope; he that hath no grace in this life shall have no true peace at his death. An old sinner is nearer to the second death, than he is to the second birth; his body is nearer to corruption than his soul is to salvation. Death levelleth the highest mountains with the lowest vallies: the robes of princes and the rags of beggars are both laid up together in the wardrobe of the grave. The reason why men so little prepare for death is, because they think so little of death. When they feel sickness arreare them, then they fear death approaching, the grave opened to rest in, but not a shop to trade in. When the soul in death takes its flight from its loving mate, it shall meet no more till the general assize. When you are putting off your clothes, think of the putting off your tabernacles, be going to your beds as if you were going to your graves, and so close your eyes in this world, as you would open them in another world when you are creeping between the sheets, then think of your winding sheet. Remember, Christians, that God can as easily turn you into the dust, as he can take you out of the dust. To day is your living day, to morrow may be your dying day: the meditation of death will prepare you for death.

2. Meditate upon judgment which is most feared, we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ. They who will not come before his mercy-seat, shall be forced to come before his judgment-seat they

will not hear his word shall feel his sword; they who are graceless in this day, will be speechless in that day. Do you mind me, sirs, at the world's end, such will be at their wits end. To see the earth flaming, the heavens melting, the stars falling, the graves opening, the judgment halting, the sun and moon mourning, and Christ and his angels a coming; he that comes to raise the dead, will also come to judge the dead. Oh! sirs, the great day to great sinners, will be a terrible day, when they shall see Christ coming in the clouds who hath the person of a man, but the power of God, being crowned with dignity, and guarded with angels, and enraged with anger, and enabled with power, to bring all kings and nobles, high and low, rich and poor to his bar, and there he will judge them not by the witness of their countenances, but by the blackness of their consciences. He that was guarded to the cross with a band of soldiers, shall be guarded to the bench with a guard of angels. You that make no account of his coming, how do you think to give an account at his coming? For the Lord's sake meditate upon judgment, the meditation of judgment, sirs, may make you judgment-proof; they who now judge themselves in their own private sessions, shall not be judged by Christ at his public assize.

2. Meditate upon hell which is most doleful. O sirs, heaven is a place where all is joyful, and hell is a place where all is doleful; in the former there is nothing but happiness, and in the latter there is nothing but heaviness. Psal. ix. 17. The wicked shall be turned into hell. Mark sirs, The wicked shall be turned into hell. O dreadful place, where the Devil is the joy, the prison, damnation the punishment, eternity the time, brimstone the fire, and men and spirits the fuel; to endure this will be intolerable, to avoid it will be impossible. This is the day of God's long suffering, that will be the day of man's long suffering; there they may suffer, and suffer without ease, and torment without end. Sorrow without succour, and misery without mercy. For the Lord's sake meditate

ditate upon hell. O what hells are there in hell, the loss of God, the loss of Christ, the loss of all good, and endless and easeless remediless torments must be their portion. O that you would but often think of hell, if once thou droppest into hell, after a thousand years you shall be as far from coming out as you were at your first entrance in. There is a way to keep a man out of hell, but no way to get a man out of hell. The wheat and the chaff they may both grow together, but they shall not both ly together, in hell there shall not be a saint among those that are terrified; and in heaven there shall not be a sinner among those that are glorified. The sea of damnation shall not be sweetned with a drop of compassion. Will you pity a body that is going to the block, and wilt thou not pity a body that is going to the pit? What a sad visitation is that, where the black horse of death goeth before, and the red horse of wrath followeth after? O that must needs be sad, when one death comes upon the back of another. A man's condition in this life may be honourable, and yet his state as to another life may be damnable. Poor Lazarus goes to heaven, when rich Dives goes to hell. It is better to go to heaven poorly, than it is to go to hell richly. O sirs, let us go to heaven by contemplation, that we may never go to hell by condemnation.

4. Meditate on heaven, which is most joyful. Mat. xxv. 24. 'Come ye blessed inherit the kingdom prepared for you.' Heaven is a place where all joy is enjoyed, mirth without sadness, light without darkness, sweetness without bitterness, life without death, rest without labour, plenty without poverty. Oh what joy entreth into a believer, when he enters into the joy of his Master! who would not work for glory with the greatest diligence? and wait for glory with the greatest patience? O what glories are there in glory, thrones of glory, crowns of glory, vessels of glory, a weight of glory, a kingdom of glory; here Christ puts his grace upon his spouse, but there he puts his glory upon his spouse. In heaven the crown is made

for them; and in heaven the crown shall be worn by them. In this life believers have some good things, but the rest and the best are reserved for the life to come. Ours! meditate upon heaven, the meditation of heaven will make us heavenly: heaven is not only a possession promised, but a possession purchased, when our contemplations and conversations are in heaven, then we enjoy heaven upon earth: to be in Christ, is heaven below: and to be with Christ is heaven above: there cannot be a better thing for us, than for us to be with the best of things. 'To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain,' Philip, i. 21. Paul was contented to stay a while out of heaven that he might bring other souls into heaven, his life to them was most useful, but his death to him was most gainful. Let our condition be never so great, it is hell without him! and let our condition be never so bad, it is heaven with him. I had rather be in hell with Christ, than in heaven without Christ, saith Luther. Indeed hell itself would be heaven if God were in it, and heaven would be hell if God were from it. That which makes heaven so full of joy is that it is above all fear, and that which makes hell so full of horror is, that it is below all hope. The vessel of grace shall swim in the ocean of glory. Here all the earth is not enough for one man; but there one heaven is enough for all men. A believer shall see with an eye that is purified; what he shall shortly see with an eye that is glorified. We may talk of the greatness of our crowns, but we shall never know the weight of our crowns till they be set on our heads. This is the second.

III. Set the watch of our lives by the Sun of righteousness, Mal. iv. 2.

Live in print, and keep the copy of your life from spots and blurs that the character thereof may be read by all, and bring up the bottom of your lives to the top of your lights. Then only doth the watch of our lives move with uprightness, when it is set by the beams of the Sun of righteousness. The grace of God that bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all

men; teaching us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world,' Tit. ii. 11, 12.

They who will not submit to grace's teaching, shall never enjoy grace's salvation. Oh, live so that the word which hath brought salvation to your souls may bring your souls into salvation; that you may be such jewels of grace, as shall be locked up in the cabinet of glory. The Father of light takes no pleasure in the children of darkness: 'Let your light so shine before men,' Mat. v. 16. We must first shine in grace before we can shine in glory. They who look for heaven made ready, should live as if they were in heaven already.

There are four things that make up a new creature, 1. Light. 2. Life. 3. Holiness. And 4. Good works. The children of light must put on the armour of light.

I cannot but sadly reflect on the inconstancy of rotten professors: an applauded Christ shall have many Hosanna's, but a condemned Christ shall have many crucifiers: but a true believer can as well go with Christ to the tree where he is to be crucified, as he can go with Christ to the throne where he is to be glorified. Oh, how unanswerable are the lives of some professors to the light of professors? They know much, but do little. They know the good they are to do, but they do not the good they know. They speak of things above, but they love and follow after things below. A man is not what he saith, but he is what he doth; to say what we do, and not do what we say, is but to undo ourselves by doing. Take heed sirs, that you do not take yourselves to hell with heavenly words. What is the great prejudice that the world hath against professors, but this, that they who profess against pride more than others, are themselves as proud as others. They profess against covetousness more than others, but are themselves as covetous as others: they often meet together to be better, but they are never the better, for their often meeting together. Do but take

away their profession, and take away their religion, they have nothing of the shape but the skin, they are better in their out side than they are in their in side.

O sirs, if ungodliness be evil, why do ye so much profess it? and if godliness be good, why do ye so little practise it? Either take Christ into your lives, or cast Christ out of your lips; either obey his commandments more, else call him Lord no more: either get oil in your lamps, or cast away your lamps. To be a professor of piety, and a practiser of iniquity, is an abomination unto the Lord. Some would not seem evil, and yet would be so; others would be good, and yet would not be so; either be what thou seemest, or else seem what thou beest. There are many that blush to confess their sins, that did never blush to commit their sins. There is nothing done in vain, but that is vainly done. O Christians, bring your lights to the light. What darkness can obscure them who have a sun about them? Believers when their candles are put out, they can fetch light from the Sun of righteousness. The nearer you are to such a sun, the clearer will be your light. Oh, Christians, you are never the better of your lights, if you are not made better by your light, he that sins against his light, will at last sin away his light. If thy light do not put sin and the world under thy feet; it will never put a crown of glory on thy head. This is the third.

IV. Be willing to want what God is not willing to give.

A God hath never the less for the mercies he giveth, so he hath never more for the duty he receiveth. Man is such a debtor to God, that he can never pay the due to God. We are so far from paying the utmost farthing, that at the utmost we have not a farthing to pay. There is no man but he hath received more good than he deserveth, and done more evil than he hath suffered; therefore he should be contented, he enjoy but little good, and not discontented, he suffer much evil. Let us therefore be contented, 1 Tim. vi. 8. A Christian is to submit to the

will of God's disposing, as well as to the will of God commanding; that man obtains his will of God that submits his will to God. A gracious heart should never be out of heart, because he hath said, 'I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.' Heb. xiii. 5. He that hath said it, will not unsay it, therefore take up your contentment in God's appointment. We are not to be troubled for this that we have no more from God, but we are to be troubled for this that we do no more for God. A Christian, tho' he hath a will of his own, yet it becometh not a Christian to do his own will, contentment without the world, is better than the world with contentment. Christian, get a holy heart, and thy estate on earth shall be transcendent, yea, thy estate on earth shall be sufficient. Christian, is not God willing to give thee riches? O then, be thou willing to want riches. Is not God willing to give thee health? O then be thou willing to want health. Is not God willing to give thee children? O then, be thou willing to want children. Is not God willing to give thee thy desire of this thing, or that thing? O be thou willing to want that thing, we many times stand in our own light. Never were any saints their own carvers, but before they had done, they cut their own fingers: Lot (you know) was put to his own choice and he chose Sodom, but ye know how it fell out, it was not long before Sodom was burnt; so Rachel said, give me children, or else I die, and she had a child, and it cost her her life. Abraham desired the life of Ishmael, but he had but little comfort of him all his days. Therefore dear Christian, submit thy will to God's will. That soul shall have his will of God that desires nothing but what God will. Do but take care of that all which belongs to God, and God will take care of all that which belongs to you.

It is nothing but reason that God would fall out with them in the course of his providence, that fall off from him in the course of their obedience. Wicked men make the world their treasure, and God makes the world their torment: When they want estates, they

are troubled with them; and when they have estates, they are troubled with them. Murmuring persons think every thing too much that is done by them, and every thing too little that is done for them. God is as far from pleasing them with his mercy, as they are from pleasing God with their duty. It is unthankfulness, that is the cause of the earth's unfruitfulness. Did a man believe that the Lord would not fail in his body, how carefully would he look after his soul? It is only the Christian man that is the contented man, he doth not quarrel with God for mercies denied, but blesteth God for mercies bestowed. The higher a Christian is raised above the things of the earth, the more he is ravished with the joys of heaven. This is the fourth.

V. Crucify your sins that hath crucified your Saviour.

They that are Christ's, saith Paul, 'I have crucified the flesh with the lusts thereof.' Did the rocks rent when Christ died for our sins, and shall not our hearts rent that have lived in our sins; O the nails that pierced his hands, should now pierce our hearts. They should wound themselves with their sorrows, who have wounded him with their sins; that they who grieved his Spirit, it should grieve their spirits. Oh, that ever I should be so bad a child to him, that hath been so good a Father to me! our sins have been our greatest terror, and our Saviour hath been our choicest helper.

Oh! put sin to death, that was the cause of Christ's death; if one should kill our father, would we hug him, and embrace him as our friend, let him eat at our table, and not rather hate and detest the very sight of him. If a snake should sting thy dearly beloved spouse to death, wouldst thou preserve it alive, warm it at the fire, hug it in thy bosom, and not rather stab it with a thousand wounds? And were not our sins the cause and instruments of Christ's death? Were not they the whips that scourged him, the nails, the cords, the spear, the thorns that wounded him, and fetched the heart blood from him, and can we love our

sins that killed our Saviour? Can a spouse love her husband, and her heart embrace an adulterer? We complain of the sin of Judas and of the Jews, and seem to hate them, and spit at their mention: and can we love our Judas sins that set them all on work, and put Christ to death? And yet how many are there that had rather have sinful-self satisfied, than to have sinful-self crucified. Oh, sin is that mark at which all the arrows of vengeance are shot: were it not for sin, death had never had a beginning, and were it not for death, sin would never have had an ending. Man began to be sorrowful, when he began to be sinful. The wind of our lusts blew out the candle of our lives. If a man had nothing to do with sin, death had nothing to do with man.

Oh! did sin bring sorrow into the world? O then let sorrow carry sin out of the world. Of all evils, sin is the greatest evil, Rom. vi. 23. 'The wages of sin is death.' Oh, it is worse than punishment, banishment and imprisonment: sin killeth both body and soul, it throws the body into cold earth rotting, and his soul into the hot hell burning. Oh! for the Lord's sake, think of this, and weep for them sometimes. Let the cry of your prayers, out-cry the cries of your sins.

Nothing can quench the fire that sin hath kindled, but the water which repentance hath caused. 'If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and cleanse us from our sins,' 1 John i. 11. A saint is not free from sin, that is his burden: a saint is not free to sin, that is his joying: sin is in his soul, that is his lamentation. His soul is not in sin, that is his consolation. If you will not sin in your grief, then grieve for your sins. That is the fifth.

VI. Do you bless God most, who are most blessed: 'God is good to all, but to Israel he is truly good, even to such as are of a clean heart,' Psal. lxxiii. 1. They can never speak enough of God, who have tasted the goodness of God: it is but reason that they should bless most, who are the most blest.

They

They who hold the largest farms, must pay the greatest rent. Differing mercies call for differing duties. It is very meet that he should be magnified by us, that makes us meet to be glorified with him. O Christians, if he hath called you out of your marvellous darkness into his marvellous light, you ought to shew forth his marvellous praise, 1 Pet. ii. 9. 'But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that you should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness, into his marvellous light.' Men should not glory in what they have received, but they should give glory for what they have received; the glory of God must be the golden butts, at which all the arrows of duty are shot: grace in our hearts are like stars in heaven that shineth not by their own splendor, but by the borrowed beams from the Sun of righteousness, giving thanks to the Father, who hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light, Col. i. 12.

As the best of means should make us fruitful, so the best of mercies should make us thankful. Shall a saint find God a master that is bountiful, and shall not God find a saint a servant that is dutiful? If he gives us any enjoyment, it is for his own entertainment. He shall never want mercy, that doth not play the wanton with mercy. To bless God for mercies is the way to increase them: to bless God for miseries is the way to remove them. No good lives so long as that which is thankfully improved: no evil dies so soon, as that which is patiently endured. O Christians, give all your glory unto him, who hath given all his glory unto you and do as those glorified ones do in glory, 'The four and twenty elders fell down before him that sat on the throne, and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord to receive all glory, and honour, and power, for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they were, and are created, Rev. iv. 10, 11. All you have is derived from God, let all you have be turned to God. The

more God's hand is enlarged in the blessing of us, the more our hearts shall be enlarged in the blessing of God. O believers! he hath frowned upon others, but he hath smiled upon you; he hath past by others doors, and knocked at your doors, he hath made you light, when others are heavy, he hath made you living, when others are dead, he hath made you heirs of glory, when others are children of wrath, he hath made you sons, when others are slaves, he hath made you higher than angels, when others are no better than devils. This hath he done, and more for you who are believers. Now, have you not great cause to bless God? Whilst man is a blessing of God for his mercies, God is a blessing of man with his mercies. Can you find me out that good that is not given you, or that evil that is not forgiven you? God deserves more from every Christian than he demands from every Christian; where the Sun of mercy shines the hottest, there the fruits of grace should grow fairest. That is the sixth.

VII. Fear not the fear of men.

Wicked men must not be feared, tho' they be never so mighty, nor followed tho' never so many; 'Fear not them that can kill the body, (saith our blessed Saviour) and can do no more,' Mat. x. 28. If a righteous cause bringeth us into suffering, a righteous God will bring us out of suffering. If we suffer for well doing, we do well in suffering: shall we cease to be professors, because others will not cease to be persecutors: if ye suffer for well doing, saith the scripture ye are happy. What, are we members of Christ, and yet afraid to be martyrs for Christ? what are the children of God afraid of the children of the devil? are the children of light afraid of the children of darkness? Are the children of heaven afraid of the children of wrath? What, tho' you be weak, your King is strong, what tho' you be lambs among wolves, your Captain is the Lion of the tribe of Judah, what tho' you have no power, Christ hath all power given him both in heaven and earth, Mat xxviii. 19.

The fear of persecution is more than persecution, he that loveth a base life for Christ, shall find a better life in Christ; persecution, tho' it bring death in the end, it brings life in the other; tho' it kills the body, it crowns the soul: it sends the body to the dust, and the spirit to rest: the worst they can do against us, is the best they can do for you; the worst they can do, is but to send you out of the earth, and the best they can do for you, is but to send you up to heaven: they take a life from you, which you cannot keep, and bestow a life upon you which you cannot lose: if they be blessed who die in the Lord. Oh how blessed are they that die for the Lord? Do wicked men glory in that which is their shame, and shall we be ashamed of that which is our glory? It is an honour to be dishonoured for Christ. What is a short happiness attended with everlasting misery, to a short misery attended with everlasting happiness? Oh, how clear shall the Sun of righteousness shine, when these dark clouds are blown over? What if they threaten you with present death, doth not God threaten you with everlasting death? If you be not ruled by him, whose threatenings should you fear? Is man more terrible than God? Is death more dreadful than hell? God hath said, Fear not man, who art thou that thou shouldest be afraid of a man that shall die, and of the sons of men that shall be made as the grass, Isa. li. 12. Do you see Christian, God would not have you be afraid of men: he that is afraid of man is afraid of grass. Fear not, I am with thee; be not dismay'd, for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee, yea, I will help thee, yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness, Ps. xli. 10. Let but professors do their best, and then let the world do their worst. That is the seventh.

VIII. Cleave thou closest to that truth which is choicest.

First, Be for hearing and doing both, but for doing more; he that doth most, shall receive most: Christian, the more glory you bring to God, the more glory you shall have from God. O how abundant shall

they be in the work of the Lord, that know their labour is not in vain in the Lord, 1 Cor. xv. 58.

Secondly, Be for knowlege and practice both, but to practice more. Alas! what is it to be a Christian, no farther than a few good words will go? I tell you first, good words without good works, will never turn to a good account. Holy sayings without holy doings, will never conduct your souls to a holy place.

Thirdly, Be for gifts and graces both, but for graces more: a heart sanctified is better than a tongue silvered. Grace brings Christ and souls together, and unites them together. Without grace there may be a knowlege that is seeming, but without grace there can be no knowlege that is saving.

Fourthly, Be for credit and conscience both, but for conscience more. Where there is a pure conscience, there will be a pure conversation. As no flattery can heal a bad conscience, so no cruelty can hurt a good conscience.

Fifthly, Be good in good times, and bad too, but in bad more. To be good at all times is a Christian's duty; but to be good in bad times is a Christian's glory. You cannot tread in the steps of our Saviour, but you would taste of the cup of our Saviour: any man, saith the apostle, that will live godly in Christ Jesus, must suffer persecution.

Sixthly, Be for body and soul both, but for soul more. O how careful are men for their bodies, but how careless for their souls? They are true to the part which is without, but false to that part within. So if they may have but something of the world in their hands, they care not tho' they have nothing of heaven in their hearts. O Christians, our work below is then the best done, when our work above is first done. The greatest happiness of the creature is, not to have the creature for one's happiness.

Seventhly, Be for truth and peace, but for truth more. Oh, Christians, love the truth in truth. Love the truth of God in truth, justify the truth, and the truth will justify you. Till you can love the naked truth, you

will never love to go naked for the truth. Remember that I pray Christians.

Eighthly, Be for life and Christ both, but for Christ more. Christ is sweeter than wine, better than life. He that came from above, is above all. He that hath the key of heaven, can only open the door of heaven.

Ninthly, be for works and faith too, but for faith more. Faith is a grace that is the most needful, and a grace that is the most fruitful; a faith that worketh not, is a faith that saveth not: nothing will get up to heaven, Christians, but that which came down from heaven.

Tenthly, Be for public duties and private too, but for private more. Be much in private duties, if you fall short in any, fall short in public duties, and be most in private, you that have filled the book of God with your sins, should fill the bottle of God with your tears.

Eleventhly, Be for form and power both, but for power more, I say, but for power more. Christians, alas, what is the form without the power? They give God the cap and knee, and give up themselves to all manner of abominable wickedness. O Christians, I say, be for power, be sure you look to that, that ye be for the power of godliness, more than the form of godliness.

Twelfthly, Seek to please men, and God both, but rather God, to be in favour with them that are out of favour with God, to be well spoken of by them who are evil spoken of by God, is either a reproach than an honour. If there be no fellowship between Christ and you in holiness, there will be no happiness between Christ and you in happiness. This is the eighth.

IX. Acquaint yourselves with yourselves.

The trial of yourselves is the ready road to the knowledge of yourselves. No man begins to be good, till he sees himself to be bad. Till you see how foul your faces are, you will never pay tribute to Christ for washing of them. He can never truly relish the sweetness of God's mercies, who never tasted the bitterness

of his own misery. The bottom of our disease lieth here that we search not our disease to the bottom. He that trusteth in his heart, is a fool, and yet such fools are we, that we trust our hearts. The conversation may be civilized, when the affections are not sanctified. A man may be acquainted with the grace of truth, who never knew the truth of grace, therefore examine yourselves, and prove yourselves, 1 Cor. xiii. 5. whether ye be in the faith, or no; or whether the faith be in you, or no. See whether your hearts be the cabinet of such a jewel, for want of this, many are like travellers, skilled in other countries, but ignorant of their own. Many have their evidences of grace to seek, where they should have their evidences of grace to show. O beloved, I beseech you with beseeching, be more in searching your own hearts. It is of greater concernment to know the state of your hearts, than to know the state of all our estates. A man may profess like a saint, pray like a saint, speak like a saint, look like a saint. You cannot always tell what a clock it is in a man's breast by the dial of his countenance. The humblest look is sometimes linked to the proudest heart.

Believers, for the Lord's sake, consider well these three things. First, What you were in the state of nature. (3.) What you are in the state of grace. (3.) What you shall be in the state of glory.

Oh! methinks you should think of this what you were, are, and what you shall be. Conversion beginneth in consideration. Grace as it maketh our comforts sweeter, so it makes our crown greater. Beloved, for God's sake, for your soul's sake, acquaint yourselves with yourselves, the readiest way to know whether or no you are in Christ, is to know whether or no Christ be in you; for the fruit is more visible than the root. The tree of righteousness is known by the fruit of righteousness, Mat. vi. 20. 'The tree is known by its fruit,' said our Lord Jesus Christ, if you would know the heart of your sins, you must then know the sins of you hearts. Will you remember that Christians?

For out of the heart, saith our Lord, proceed evil thoughts, murders, adultery, and fornication, and blasphemy, Mat. xv. 19. Many have passed the rocks and shoals of sin, that have been cast away upon the sands of self-righteousness, if you be found in your righteousness, you will be lost in your righteousness; he that hath no better righteousness than what is of his own providing, shall meet with no bigger happiness, than what is of his own deserving. This is the ninth.

X. Do good in the world, with the goods of the world.

It is better to spend your time in doing good, than in getting goods: for the goods we get, we must leave; but the good we do will never leave us, Rev. xiv. 13. They shall rest from their labours, and their works shall follow them. The ambitious man shall leave all his greatness behind him, when the righteous man shall carry all his goods with him. Dives, his charity was very cold, and he found the flames of hell very hot. There is not a drop of water for such Dives's in hell, nor have not a crumb of bread for such Lazarus's on earth. Dives denied Lazarus a crumb of bread, and therefore Lazarus must not bring him a drop of water. He that will shew no mercy, shall have no mercy shewed him. Let charity be your shop to trade in, and eternity shall be your bed to rest in. Be a father to all in charity, and a servant to all in humility: do much good, and make but little noise: every grace that is more exercised, shall be more glorified: the more good ye do for God, the more good ye shall receive from God. As the poor cannot live without your mercy on earth, so without God's mercy you shall not live in heaven. He that gives to the poor saints for Christ's sake, shall be rewarded by Christ for the same sake, Matth. xxv. 36, to the 40. I was naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall all the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and

and took thee in? Or naked, and clothed, thee? when saw we thee sick or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer, and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, in as much as ye have done unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.' The more ye discourse for Christ on earth, the greater sums of glory you shall receive from Christ in heaven, the crop that is sown in mercy, shall be reaped in glory.

As we must lay all out in the cause of God, so we must lay down all for the cause of God. That which is cast into God's treasure by the way, is not cast away. A man of mercy is so good a servant, that it will never let his master die a beggar, tho' it make your pockets lighter, yet it will make your crown the greater. O that God would give the rich so much! and O that the rich should give the poor so little! Some say that the barest ground is nearest to the richest mines. It is true in a spiritual sense. How many rich men, whose estates be like a fruitful paradise, yet their hearts are like a barren wilderness? They have much of the earth in their hands, but nothing of heaven in their hearts. They be rich in goods, but not in goodness. Wonder that such worldings do not tremble at the sayings, Matth. xxv. 41, to the 46. Then shall he say also to them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels: For I was an hungred, and ye gave me not meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. Then shall they also answer him saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, in as much as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal. That men should be so much mistaken with the

riches, who must ere long be taken from their riches. As you brought nothing of your coin into the world with you, so you shall carry none of it out of the world with you, in the world you find it, and in the world you shall leave it; to whom you know not, may be to them you would not. Did but some rich men know before their death, how their gold and silver would be spent after death, they would wish it back again at the mines, from whence it came. O ye rich men, I say unto you, do good in the world with the good of the world, it is a greater honour to give like a prince, than live like a prince. It is better to have a heart, and not wherewith, than to have wherewith, and not have a heart. Give, and it shall be given you, your charity should seek the poor, before the poor seek your charity. He that sheweth mercy when he may be best spared, shall receive mercy, when it shall be most needed. This is the tenth.

XI. Improve that time which will be yours but a time; time ere long, shall be to you time no longer, Rev. x. 6.

Opportunities are for eternity, but opportunities are not to eternity; Christians, remember that that time is short in which you run, but the prize is great in which you run. As you have not a lease of your lives, so you have not a brace of your lives. Had we need to take heed how we shoot, that have but a single arrow to direct to the mark? No time is ours but what is present: and that is as soon past as present, nature's womb often proves nature's tomb.

Oh! consider how much of your time is gone, and how little of your work is done, shall your rest be away one half of your time, and your lusts the other? Oh! what enemies are they to themselves that sell their days allow themselves not one? Your work is great, and your life is short; you have a God to serve, a Christ to be believed in, and a soul to save, you have a race to run, a crown to win, a hell to escape, and a heaven to make sure: You have many strong corruptions to weaken, and many weak graces

to strengthen: you have many temptations to withstand, and many afflictions to bear; you have many mercies to improve, and many duties to perform, therefore endeavour to improve your time. All that God allows us, is little enough to perform the which he allots us: therefore dear Christians, redeem the time, Eph. v. 16. 'Redeem the time because the days are evil.' If much of your time be past, let more of your time be waste; how much the longer our time hath been, the shorter our time shall be. Oh! that every step your souls take, might be towards heaven; and that ye would make sure of God tomorrow, because next day you are not sure of yourselves, for the Lord's sake improve your time; for your souls sake redeem the time. The lawyer will not lose his term, the water-man will not lose his tide, the trader will not lose his exchange-time, the husbandman will not lose his season, and will you lose your precious season? If you lose your season, you lose your souls, know that there is but one heaven, and miss that, where will you take up your lodging, but in hell. There is no sitting up underground, for those that have lost their time above ground: the great hindrance to well living, is the expectation of long living. Many think not of living any better, till they think of not living any longer. O how just is it that they should miss of heaven at the last? Now is the time of grace, God accept of you, and now is the time for you to accept of grace, to day, to day, to-day saith God, thrice in this chapter, Heb. iv. 7. To-day, in the 7 verse. To-day, in the 12 verse. To-day, in the 15 verse. Oh, but I will say, to-morrow, to-morrow, to-morrow. Alas! one to-day is better than two to-morrows; this day thy living day, to-morrow may be thy dying day, therefore for the Lord's sake put it not off. Now or never, now for ever, now or never, up and be doing, lest you be for ever undone. This is the eleventh.

XII. Learn humility from Christ's humility, 'Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest to your souls,' Matth. xi. 29.

Humility makes a man like an angel, and for want of it angels were made devils: proud sinners be fit companions for none but proud devils. The most love-professor, is the most lowly professor. A believer is like a vessel at sea, the more it fills the more it sinks. Be so humble upon earth, as those that live highest in heaven; do but see now one of the best of saints, looks upon himself as one of the least of all saints, 'Unto me who am less than the least of all saints,' said great Paul, Eph. iii. 8. The most holy men be always the most humble men; Where humility is the corner-stone, there piety is the top-stone. It is good to have some thoughts of ourselves. The cloth of humility should always be worn on the back of Christianity. God almighty hath two houses in the which he dwells, his city house, and his country house; his city house is the heaven of heavens, and his country-house is the humble and lowly heart, Isa. lviii. 15. 'I will dwell in the high and holy place.' That is in heaven God's city house, and with him that is of a contrite and humble spirit, that is his country house; humility is a Bethel for God's dwelling place, pride is a Babel of the devil's building. If you do not keep pride out of your souls, and your souls out of pride, pride will keep your souls out of heaven. I will not say a poor man is never proud, but I will say a proud man is never good; 'God resisteth the proud,' James iv. 6. 'God resisteth the proud but gives grace to the humble.' The face of prosperity shines brightest through the mask of humility, of all garments humility best becomes Christians, and best adorns their profession. God will not endure that any man should think well of himself but himself. A Christian should look with one eye upon grace, to keep him thankful, and with the other eye upon vice to keep him mournful. When you begin to grow proud of your glistening feathers, look down upon your black feet, Rev. ix. 10. 'The four and twenty elders fell down before the throne, and cast down their crowns before him that sat upon the throne.' The only way of keeping our crowns on

on our heads, is the casting them down at his feet. Alas! Sirs, what are ye proud of, are ye proud of your riches, of your honours, of your relations, beauty, or strength, or life? Alas! alas! these poor low things to glory in. When men glory in their pride, God stains the pride of their glory. O to the graves of those that are gone before you, there see, are not their bones scattered, their flesh washed, their flesh consumed, their mouth corrupted? Where now be those ruddy lips, lovely cheeks, sweet tongues, sparkling eyes, comely noses, are they all gone as a dream? and where will you be long! And will you be proud of these things? A humble heart knoweth no fountain but God's grace, and an upright man knoweth no end but God's glory. This is the twelfth.

XIII. Be upright Christians.

The gospel doth not only require that we should be excellent Christians, but that we should be diligent Christians. The more glorious dispensation you live under, the more glorious conversations you should have. Spiritual actions will make you look fresh in the eyes of spiritual Christians. The more you have of God in you, the more you shall have of good with you. The clearer the lamp of grace burneth on earth, the brighter the sun of glory shall shine in heaven. We live by dying to ourselves, and die by living in ourselves. Christians should be burning lamps as well as shining lamps. Should we walk in darkness, whose Father is light? Shall the tongue be found lying so constantly to men, that was found praying so earnestly to God? or those be found gazing on sinful objects that were found reading of sacred oracles. Shall such as have received Christ's press-money, fight under Satan's colours? Beloved, either let your works be according to your profession, or else let your profession be according to your works. Never put on the suit of profession, to do thy foul work of corruption; never put on Christ's livery, and do Satan's drudgery. Let every one that names the name of the Lord

pass from iniquity. 'Not every one that saith to
Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of
heaven, but he that doth the will of my Father,
which is in heaven,' Matth. vii. 21, 22. O that men's
tongues should be larger than their hands! in words
they profess him, but in works they deny him. Many
put a crown of gold on the head of Christ by a good
profession, but place a crown of thorns on the head
of Christ by an evil conversation. 'They feared the
Lord, but served their own gods,' 2 Kings xvii. 13.
Alas! beloved, what good will your profession do
you, if you do not make good your profession? It is
better never to shine, than not to be gold; either take
out your lamps, or throw away your lamps. The
most Christian shall be but almost saved. Therefore
brethren, let me beseech you, be altogether Chris-
tians, be right upright Christians, be sincere Christi-
ans, be as godly as the godly. Holy David tells, Psal.
101. 2, 3, 4. who is the upright man, who is the right
Christian, 'He that walketh uprightly, and
speaketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth from
his heart, he shall dwell in thy tabernacle; and so be
thy son. If you would keep yourselves unspotted from
the world, you must keep yourselves unspotted in the
world. Oh, be not vain in a vain world. The loose
living of Christians, are the reproaches of Christi-
anity. Were Abraham now on earth who is in heaven,
would the Father of the faithful blush at their
lives, they stile themselves his off-spring? O there
be some men who think themselves too good to go to
heaven, and God thinks them too bad to go to heaven;
such was a just man and perfect in his generation,
Job vi. 9. He was not a sinner among those that
were saints; but he was a saint among those that
were sinners; he walked with God when others walk
in iniquity. He was a just man like unto God,
there was never another man like unto him.
The primitive Christians were the best of Christians,
they knew little but did much; we know much but
do little. O I fear, if the service of God be bad, why
do

do you set forth in it? Be altogether Christ; and if ye be not, ye are no Christians. It is good to profess, but better to practise; yea, of the two, practice without profession, is better than profession without practice. We must not be offended at the profession of religion by those who are not religious, that make profession without practice. Tho' there be many professors that are not believers, yet there are no believers but are professors; Christians, when you make a good profession, be so good that your profession shall be good. That is the thirteenth.

XIV. Let it be thy art in duty, to give God thy heart in duty.

My son give me thy heart, Prov. xxiii. 26. Ye know that God calls for the heart, the heart is that field in which God expects the utmost plentiful crops of grace. God bears a greater respect to your hearts, than he doth to your works. God looks most when men are alone, least, if the heart be for God, then all is for God. Our affections, our wills, our desires, our time, our strength, our tears, our alms, our prayers, our efforts, our bodies, our souls, for the heart is the fort that commands all the rest. The eye, the ear, the hand, the tongue, the head, the foot, the heart commands all these. Now if God had the heart, he hath all; if he hath not the heart he hath none, the heart of obedience is the obedience of the heart, as the body is at the command of the soul that rules it, so should the soul be at the command of God who gave it, 1 Cor. vi. 20. 'Ye are bought with a price, faith the apostle, therefore glorify God in your bodies, and in your spirits.' He that is all in all in us, would have that which is all in all in us. The heart is the presence chamber where the king of glory takes up his lodging. The heart which is most worthy in us, should be given to him that is most worthy of us. The body is but the cabinet, the soul is the jewel, the body is but the shell, the soul is the kernel. The soul is the breath of God, the beauty of man, the wonder of angels, the envy of devils. The devil knows if there be any good in us, sure, it is in our hearts; and would fain have the

is cabinet that he might rob us of our jewel. Evil would fain have the key of the heart. As we commit our estates into the hands of men, so we commit ourselves into the hand of God. But man hath no mind to give what God hath a mind to have. 'This people draw near to me with their mouth, and honour me with their lips; but their hearts are far from me.' Matth. xiii. 15.

Too many have their hearts to seek when they come to seek God. You may keep your duty to yourselves, if you do not give your hearts to him. A heart that is heartless, is a duty that is fruitless. You never give God the heart of your service, if you do not give him the heart in your service. The heart must be the first that comes into duty, and the last that goes out of duty. Good words without the heart are flattery, and good works without the heart are hypocrisy. Beloved, for your poor soul's sake, words and works go together, your tongues and your feet go together, your lips and lives go together, your prayers and practice go together; if your duties do not eat out the heart of your sins, your sins will eat out the heart of your duties. A dram of matter is more than a flood of words. A heart without words is more than words without a heart. A little done with the heart is better than a great deal done without the heart, nothing takes with the heart of God, that is done with the heart of man. He that regards the heart without any thing, regards not any thing without the heart: That is the fourteenth.

Be diligent in the means, but make not an idol of the means.

Use all diligence to make your calling and election sure, 2 Pet. i. 10. It is our present business to lay up for ourselves a good foundation, for our future blessedness. When estates and friends, and life, and friends, and pleasures cannot be made sure, let this be made sure; for you see by daily experience they cannot be made sure, 2 Tim. iv. 10. Lay up for yourselves a good foundation, 1 Cor. xiii. 12. Lay up for yourselves a good foundation.

dation. And why? That we may lay hold on life. There is no landing at the shore of felicity, out sailing in the bark of fidelity, Phil. ii. 12. out your salvation with fear and trembling. To attain to firm salvation you will never be free from temptations, Luke xiii. 24. 'Strive to enter in a strait gate.' Who would not strive for glory with greatest diligence, and wait for glory? 'Pray without ceasing.' 1 Thes. v. 17. Pray continually though not continually a praying; our daily bread calls for daily prayer. Every day begin the day and end the day with God. Let prayer be your first work and your last work every day. O Christian! lock up the heart in prayer, and give God the key: are you called by the name of Christ, and will not you call upon the name of Christ? take away spiritual breathings, and you take away spiritual living. We may pray always, and not be always at prayer: Christians can never have a praying time, if they do not want a praying time; none can pray aright but those that are new creatures. But all ought to pray because they are creatures. A spiritual man may pray carnally, but a carnal man cannot pray spiritually. Prayer fetched an angel of heaven, to fetch Peter out of prison; he prayed heartily and speeds happily. The gift of prayer, we have praise from men but it is the grace of prayer that hath power with God. Prayer never did man rich, but God did quickly grant it. No Christian hath so little of Christ, but he hath matter of prayer, and no Christian hath so much of Christ, but he hath matter of praying. Deny not God faith in prayer. God will not deny a faithful prayer. But then, in the second place, as you must be faithful in the means, make not an idol of the means. Take up all duties as a point of performance, and lay them down in a point of dependance. What is hearing without Christ, like a cabinet without a jewel, or receiving without Christ is like an empty glass without a cordial: we can never have too much of our diligence, nor too little of our confidence. A believer doth not good works

live, but he lives to do good works. It is a bad thing for us to be nothing in ourselves, and to be nothing in Christ: to undertake all our duties, and yet overlook all our duties: the righteousness of Christ is so to be magnified, but the righteousness of Christians is not to be mentioned. When we have done all, we say 'We are unprofitable servants,' Luke xvii. 10. We owe the life of our souls to the death of our Saviour. Duties they are not destroyed by Christ, but they must be denied for Christ, we have as much need of the Spirit to bring up our graces, as we have need of the Spirit to bring forth our graces. The clock of our hearts will stand still, unless we oil the wheels. Rejoice in Jesus Christ, and have no confidence in the flesh. Good works are so indigent, as none can be saved by them, and yet they are so excellent, as none can be saved without them. Duties, if Christ breathe not in them, a Christian grows not under them; we must live in obedience. Many live more upon their customs, than they do upon Christ; more upon the prayers they make to God, than upon the God to whom they make their prayers. Duties they are but dry pipes in themselves, tho' never so curiously cut out, till Christ fill them.

XVI. Take nothing upon trust, but all upon trial. Tho' all gold glisters, yet all that glisters is not gold: it is not truth that goeth for truth, 1 John iv. 1. Try the spirits, believe not every spirit. Mark, sirs, you must not believe every spirit, but try the spirits, whether they be of God or no. 1 Thes. v. 21. 'Prove all things, hold fast that which is good.' Prove all things, that is, Try all things by the scripture. Many hold fast before they try, but we must try before we hold fast. Alas! there are many in the world, that are like infants that swallow all down; all that the nurse puts into the poor babe's mouth, it swallows down: truly it is so with many men and women, whatever men say, down it goes, they will not take so much pains, as to try the sayings of men by the sayings of God. O say they, The men we hear be honest
G men,

men, able men, learned men; but would you not tell money after them? would you not weigh gold after them? I suppose you would; and will you take doctrines upon trust without trial? Who will buy a jewel in a case, but a fool? Remember Christians, that the whore's cup is gold without, but poison within, Rev. xvii. 4. 'She had a golden cup in her hand, full of abomination and filthiness.' The cup is of gold, but the poison is the rankest poison. And methinks, this cup is much cup'd about. The learned men be grown so wise that they have almost made all the world fools, 2 Cor. ii. 1. 'As there were false prophets among the people, so there must be false teachers also among you.' And O! that there were not too many false teachers in those days. To counterfeit the coin of heaven, is treason against the King of heaven: and if this treason deserved hanging, I know who would be hanged next. I have often thought upon Chrysostom's saying, preaching before a company of ministers, "I profess, said he, I do not know whether any clergy-man be saved or no." You will say this was a strange saying of a minister to a company of ministers. Their calling is so weighty, their temptations so many, and their lives so bad: they speak like angels of light, but they act like angels of darkness. O how desirous are men to draw the fairest gloves upon the foulest hands? Men are better known by what they do, than by what they say, for they say and do not. Therefore beloved, believe not their flattering words nor fair speeches, whereby they deceive the hearts of the poor ignorant people, Rev. xvii. 8. Mark the apostle, By good words and fair speeches, said he, they deceive the hearts of the simple: God may reject them as copper, whom men do adore as silver. It is ill dressing ourselves for another world, by the looking glass of this world. The scriptures do not only present to us what God will do for men, but also what man must do for God. What is the reason that there are so many scribbling professors in the world, but because they write after such imperfect copies? The generality of persons, they

will rather walk in the way that the most go, than in the way that the best go: great men's vices are more imitated than poor men's graces, but know, they who follow after others in sinning, are like to follow after others in suffering; we must not walk in the way that hath been gone, but in the way that must be gone. Be ye followers of me, saith Paul, 1 Cor. xi. 1. as I am of Christ. Where he follows Christ, we must follow him, but if Paul forsake Christ we must forsake Paul, if we will not have the world to be our leaders; we shall be sure to have them to be our troublers; if they cannot seduce us into an evil way, they will oppose us in a good one: if they cannot scorch us with their fire, they will black us with their smoke; Speaking evil of you, because you run not into the same excess of riot: because they will not do evil with them, therefore they will say evil of them. But sirs, whatever ye do, follow those that follow Christ. O that they should speak so much of God to others, and act so little for God themselves. Now, beloved, I beseech you, that you would take nothing upon trust, but all upon trial: try their ways, try their doctrines, try their sayings, try their worship by the word of truth; and if it be according to truth, and agreeable to truth, and bottomed on truth, then believe it, then receive it: if not, reject it, and tread it down as dirt unto your feet, let it be who it will that brings it: nay, 'If an angel from heaven come and preach any other doctrine than the written word declares, let him be accursed. We ought not to receive it, Gal. i. 8. If an angel from heaven, saith he, bring any other doctrine than what you have received, let him be accursed.' And therefore once more let me beseech you, for the Lord's sake take nothing upon trust, but all upon trial. It is a vain thing to say it is day, when there is nothing but darkness in the sky. That is the sixteenth.

XVII. Take these reproofs best, which ye need most: be not angry with them who tell you the truth, nor with the truth that is told you, Gal. iv. 16. 'Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth.'

truth.' He can be no true friend to thee that is a friend to thy sins; and thou canst be no friend to thyself, thou art an enemy to him that tells thee of thy sin. Wilt thou like him the worse, that would have thee be better? Psal. cxli. 5. 'Let the righteous smite me, it shall be a kindness, and let him reprove me, it shall be an excellent oil.' You see here that the good man is not angry with reproofs, but takes it as a kindness, it shall be a kindness, and an excellent oil. But the serpent the more he is stirred, the more he gathers his poison to spit at you. If Amos declare the word of the Lord, the land is not able to bear all his words. Amos vii. 10. If John the Baptist endeavour to take away the life of Herod's sins, Herod will take away the life of John the Baptist, Mat. xiv. 9, 10. John was beheaded. If the prophet go about to imprison a king's sins, he himself shall be imprisoned, 2 Chron. xvi. 10. 'The king was wroth with the prophet, and he put him into prison. Jerusalem will stone the prophets, till she hath not left one stone upon another. Oh, that men should be so cruel to those that intend their cure! wicked men cannot endure reproof. You give the physicians leave to tell you of any disease that is in your bodies, you give your lawyer leave to show you any flaw that is in your estates; you give your horse keepers leave to tell you the surfeit of your horses; and what, must we only flatter you, and dissemble with you, and cry peace, peace, till your souls drop into hell? Oh! we cannot, we will not, we must not. 'Speak all the words that I have commanded thee, be not dismayed of their faces, lest I destroy thee before their faces,' Jer. i. 17. Speak to their faces, lest I destroy thee before their faces. This is the sense of the words. 'Charge them that be rich in the world, that they be not high minded,' 1 Tim. vi. 17. Good men as well as poor men must be admonished, though they be greater than the ministers in the world; yet they are no greater than he that sent the ministers into the world. But my brethren, there is a great deal of discretion to be used in reproof. Many check pass

but with passion, and anger, with anger: and this is to lay one devil, and raise another: reproof should not be with passion, but with compassion: not with laughing, but with grieving: not with laughing, but with weeping, I have told you often, and now I tell you weeping, Philip. iii. 8. The apostle could not make mention of them with dry eyes. His eyes were not because their eyes were dry. It is the part of a good man to reprove, tho' his reproofs be not taken in a good part; it is better to lose the smiles of men, than to lose the souls of men. The magistrates they look to your peace, the lawyers they look to your estates, the physicians they look to your bodies, the ministers to your souls. Ministers must draw the sword of reproof against the sins of men, and strike them, and thrust at them. 'Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them,' Eph. v. 11. Rather reprove them: we must not suffer wicked men to walk in the devil's works without reproof; we must reprove you wisely, moderately, sharply, and when ye mend your lives, we will mend our language. This is the seventeenth.

XVIII. Labour more for inward purity, than for outward felicity.

John vi. 27. 'Labour not for the meat that perisheth, but for the meat which endureth to everlasting life.' That man who is a labouring bee for earthly felicity, will be but an idle drone for heavenly felicity. Gold in your bags may make you greater, but the grace in your hearts that can make you better. He is a rich man that lives upon his wealth, but he is a righteous man that lives upon his faith. A heavenly conversation is better than an earthly possession: it is a great mercy to have a portion in the world; but to give up the world for a portion is a great misery. Our affections were made for things that are above us, and not for things that are without us, Col. iii. 1, 2. 'If ye are risen with Christ, pray mark, what then? seek the things that are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affections on things above,

bove, and not on things on the earth.' The things of this life hath not the promise of godliness, but godliness hath the promise of the things of this life. Inward piety is the best friend to outward felicity, the outward felicity be many times the worst enemy to outward piety: the ways of iniquity are the ways of beggary. Do you make heaven your throne, serve it, and God will make the earth your footstool to serve you, inward purity is the ready road to outward plenty, 1 Tim. iv. 8. 'Godliness hath the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.' O what an excellent jewel is godliness, and who would not part with all for godliness? who would not account all other things but dung and clay to gain godliness? But alas! some men are so in love with their golden bags, that they will ride post to hell, if they be well paid for their pains. They look upon gain as the highest godliness, and not upon godliness as the highest gain. They mind the world that is to come so much, as if it would never have an ending; and the world to come so little, as if it would never have a beginning. Any good will serve the turn of these who know not the chief good: the things of the world are all the happiness of the men of the world, Job xxii. 15. 'What is the Almighty, that we should serve him? Or what profit shall we have, if we pray unto him?' O! what wretched worldlings were here! O what pains do men take to cover the flesh from nakedness, when their spirits are not clothed with the robes of righteousness!

They are diligent about what is temporal, but negligent about what is spiritual; they are careful about dying vanities, but slothful about durable excellencies. They feast their bodies but starve their souls; they lay up treasures on earth, but none in heaven. O! why do you spend your money, I say, why, O beloved, do ye spend your money for that which is not bread? and why do ye labour for that which satisfieth not? read the text, Isa. lv. 2. Riches have made many good men worse, but they never

made any bad men better. Usually the poorest on earth, are the richest in heaven. If riches could free from hell, O then how few rich men would be damned? He that knocks at the creature door, will find but an empty house kept there. O beloved, what is darkness to light? what is gold to grace? what is earth to heaven? that you thus neglect the great things, the weighty things, the only things, and busy yourselves about toys and trifles, when you have a crown to look after, a heaven to look after, a kingdom to look after.

I beseech you beloved, labour more for inward holiness than for outward happiness; more for the seed of grace, than for the bag of gold; more for inward piety, than for outward plenty; more for an heavenly conversation, than for an earthly possession, the earth is for a saint's passage, but heaven is for a saint's portion. O believer, whilst thou livest, thou wilt find godliness gainful: and when thou diest, thou wilt find godliness needful. This is the eighteenth.

XIX. Live in love, and live in truth.

1 John iii. 18. 'My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed, and in truth.' That love is love in deed, and in truth, let your love Christians, be sincere, and not selfish. Gal. v. 14. Love thy neighbour as thyself. How dost thou love thyself, how dearly dost thou love thyself? Why? so thou must love thy neighbour, love thy neighbour as thyself. He that is not wanting in this duty, is wanting in no duty. It is called an old commandment, and a new commandment, 1 John ii. 7, 8. Love is here called an old commandment, and a new. It is as old as the law of Moses, and yet as new as the gospel of Jesus Christ. A carnal man may love his friend, but it is a Christian man that loves his enemy. He that loves us when we are enemies, commands us to love our enemies, Mat. v. 44. 'Love your enemies, (saith our Lord) bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, pray for them that despitefully use you, and persecute you.' A Chri-

shian should wish well to them, who wish ill to him.
 O believers! let me beseech you, let me beg of you
 for your precious soul's sake, to live in love, and to
 live in truth. Ye are all fellow-labourers, fellow-
 members, fellow-citizens, fellow-travellers, fellow-
 sufferers, fellow-heirs, fellow-servants: and will you
 not love one another? Remember Christians, he that
 would not be his brother's keeper, would be his bro-
 ther's butcher, Gen. iv. 8. We have all the same Fa-
 ther, God; the same head, Christ; the same guide,
 the Spirit; the same attendance, the angels; the same
 grace, faith; the same title, son; the same clothing,
 Christ's righteousness; the same glory, heaven. And
 shall not we be dear to one another? He that loves
 himself, will not hate his brother; for whilst thou art
 out of charity with thy brother, God is out of cha-
 rity with thee, and thou losest more for want of
 God's love, than thy brother loses for want of thy
 love, Heb. xiii. 1. Let brotherly love continue.
 Dost thou love the person of Christ, and hate the
 picture of Christ? O sirs, I remember the God of love
 hath commanded us to love one another. Beloved,
 it is a sad thing, and truly so sad that it may make
 our very hearts to bleed within us, to think that the
 Lamb's little party, Rev. xiv. 1, 2. who are in
 strength the weakest, in riches the poorest, in num-
 ber the fewest, and shall they be in love the coldest
 in judgment the most divided? Is not this sad now
 that the little ones of Jesus Christ, that the lambs of
 Jesus Christ should love one another no better? O
 Christians either lay your malice aside, or else God
 will lay you aside, as he hath done to too many of
 us at this day, to our great sorrow: while you are
 with God, God is with you, 1 Chron xv. 2. 'While
 you are with God, he is with you, and if you see
 him, he will be found of you: but if you forsake
 him, he will forsake you.' Never man was forsaken
 of God, till God was forsaken of man; he sticks
 close to us while we stick close to him, but if we for-
 sake him, he will forsake us. He that will be angry

and sin not, must not be angry but with sin. Therefore dear Christians, let me beseech you love one another. O that I could but speak out how much I desire the love of one another? O it will be a happy day when all the people of God are knit together in love, in union and affection! O sirs, if God had desired or commanded some great things of us, some burdensome thing of us, it might have been excused; but alas! it is no more but to love our brethren, and shall we deny this? But you may say, how should we believers love one another? I answer.

First, You should highly esteem one another, as pearls in comparison of other men; so doth God, God calls his people, his jewels, his treasure, his glory, his portion; when he calls wicked men, dogs, swine, swine, briars and thorns. You should be very high in one another's affections.

Secondly, You should delight in the company of one another, in the society of each other, God delights in the society of saints, so should you.

Thirdly, You should be ready to help one another, and to do good one for another, and communicate one to another. 'Remember the words of the Lord Jesus Christ, who said, it is a more blessed thing to give, than to receive.'

Fourthly, Admonish one another, exhort one another, provoke one another to love, and to do good works.

Fifthly, Sympathise one with another, fellow-members should be fellow-feelers; so did Moses and Jeremiah, and old Eli, his heart was broken before his neck was broken. Dear Christians, let me beseech you, let me beg of you, to love one another, he calls us to love, who is love itself. That is the nineteenth.

XX. Set out for God at your beginning, and hold on with God until your ending. As there are none too old for eternity, so there are none too young for mortality. 'Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth,' Eccles. xii. 1. We are born to serve God, and better we had never been born, than not

to serve him. Man is beholden to God for what he hath, but God not beholden to man for what he doth; it is a greater glory to us that we serve God than it is to God that we serve him. It is not he that is made happy by us, but we are made happy by him. He needs not such servants as we are on earth, but we need such a Master as he is in heaven. He will be everlastingly blessed without us, but we shall be everlastingly cursed without him; 'Of him, and thro' him, and to him, are all things, to whom be glory for ever. Amen.' Rom. xi. 36. It is sad, my beloved, it is sad, that we should live so long in the world, and do so little good, or that we should live so little in the world, and do so much evil. O you must not think to dance with the devil all day, and sup with Christ at night, or to go from Delilah's lap to Abraham's bosom. If salvation were easy to come by, it would be slightly set by. There is no obtaining what is promised, but by fulfilling what is commanded. The neglecting of the race of holiness, will be the obstructing of the prize of holiness. 'Follow peace with all men, and holiness without which none shall see God,' Heb. xii. 14. Beloved, there are many young people in the world, who are very wicked in the world; they walk in darkness, and do the works of darkness; they are young in years, but old in sin: they are very vain in a vain world; they live with delight, and make sin their delight: I beseech you look in Eccl. xi. 9. 'Rejoice O young man in thy youth, and let thy heart cheer thee, and walk in the ways of thine own heart.' O this is brave indeed, if it would always last; but after the flash of lightning comes the clap of thundering; mark what follows. 'But know for all these things, God will bring thee into judgment.' Do you but see here, my O were it not for this B U T, how brave were it for wicked men; 'But now for all these things, God will bring thee into judgment.' For all thy wantonness, and for all thy pride, for all thy profaneness and prodigality, thou shalt be brought into judgment.

ment. After all your present receiving, you must be brought to your future reckoning. O therefore, let nothing be done in this world, which cannot be answered in another world. Let me beseech you, who are young men, and young women, 'To remember your Creator in the days of your youth.' To serve God, to love God, to honour God, to obey God in your youthful days. The flower of life is Christ's setting, and shall it be of the devil's plucking? Will you hang the most sparkling jewel of your young years in the devil's ears? O! it is a hard casting off the devil's yokes, when we have worn them so long upon our necks. O young people if you be sick of the will not, old age will die of the cannot. If God's to-day be too soon for thy repentance, thy to-morrow will be too late for thy acceptance. You can never come too soon to God, nor stay too long with God, he shall be happy in the end, who is holy to the end; 'Be thou faithful unto the death, and I will give thee a crown of life,' Rev. ii. 10. O hold on, and hold out to the end; He that draws back from profession, shall be kept back from salvation; He that departs in the faith shall be saved; but he that departs from the faith shall be damned: 'If any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him,' Heb. x. 38. 'Be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, seeing ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord,' 1 Cor. xv. 58. So I say to you all, young and old people, 'Be steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord.' If he gives that grace that is not due to us, shall we deny that glory that is due to him? If he make our natures gracious, we should make his name glorious: Oh! be still with God, so was David, Psal. cxxxix. 18. 'When I awake, I am still with thee.' David was least alone, when he was most alone, there cannot be a better being for us, than for us to be with God. That is the last.

F I N I S.

G 6

A

A
CABINET OF JEWELS,
OR, A
GLIMPSE
OF
SION'S GLORY.

First, Loath Sin, and leave Sin.

HE that covereth his sins, shall not prosper: but whosoever confesseth and forsaketh them, shall have mercy, Prov. xxviii. 13. 'If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness,' 1 John i. 9. There must be a falling out with our sins, before there be a fall'g out from our sins; there must be a loathing of sin in our affections, before there be a leaving of sin in our conversations. Oh! is it not a thousand times better to part with sin, tho' never so sweet, than to part with God and Christ, and heaven? One of them you must do, one sin will damn a soul out of Christ; sin is the evil of evils, it is worse than the devils; for it is that, that made the devil to be a devil. Oh! that love of sin, and the lack of grace will ruin and destroy your souls for ever; it is better not to be, than to be a sinner: better to be no people, than not to be the Lord's people. Oh! therefore kill sin, that sin may not kill you, mourn for sin, and

From sin, do not commit new sins, but repent for old sins. Ezek. xxxvi. 31. 'Ye shall loath yourselves in your sight, for your iniquities.' Oh poor soul! hast thou not served the flesh and the devil long enough? yes, hast thou not had enough of sin? Is it so good to thee, so profitable for thee? Oh! what a place wilt ye be shortly in, of joy or torment? Oh! what a sight will you see shortly in heaven or hell? O what thoughts will shortly fill your hearts with unspeakable delight, or horror! What work will ye be employed in, to praise the Lord with saints and angels, or to cry out in fire unquenchable with devils? Oh! therefore die unto sin, confess it, mourn for it, and be ashamed of it; hate and loath it, and flee from it, as from a serpent, and though your sins are more than ye can number, yet they are no more than God can pardon.

II. 'Put off the old-man, and put on the new-man, lie not one to another, seeing ye have put off the old-man with his deeds, and have put on the new-man, which is renewed in knowlege, after the image of him that created him, Col. iii. 9, 10. And what you put on the new-man, which after God is created in righteousness, and true holiness, Eph. iv. 24. For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature, Gal. iv. 15. As new born babes desire the sincere milk of the word that ye may grow thereby. 1 Pet. ii. 2. Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are past away, behold all things are become new. 2 Cor. v. 17. A new understanding, a new will, new desires, new love, new delights, new thoughts, new words, new company, and new conversations. He is not what he was before; Oh! dear friends, be new creatures, that ye may be glorious creatures. We can call nothing in ourselves ours, till Christ be ours, without regeneration there is no salvation: 'Verily, verily, I say unto you, except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven,

ven, John iii. 3. Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God, you have heard much of God, Christ, and heaven with your ears, but this will not bring you to heaven, unless you have much of God, Christ, and heaven in your hearts; you must be able to say, I was once a slave, but now a son; once I was dead, but now I am alive; once I was in darkness, but now I am light in the Lord; once I was a child of wrath, an heir of hell, but now I am an heir of heaven; once I was under the spirit of bondage, but now I am under the Spirit of adoption. A true believer lives in the Lord, 1 Thes. i. 1. On the Lord, Rom. i. 17. Luke xx. 38. From the Lord, John vi. 37. To the Lord, Rom. xiv. 8. With the Lord, 2 Cor. xv. 4.

III. Make your peace with the Prince of peace, Isa. ix. 6. Psalm ii. 12. 'Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little: blessed are all they that put their trust in him.' O! do not lift up your hands against the Son, but kiss the Son.

Let his will be your rule; his Spirit your guide; his precepts your practice; his decrees your delight; his chosen ones your choicest companions. Submit to his gospel and government. O sirs! make your peace with God.

There is a four-fold peace. First, There is a peace external, that is a peace with men. Secondly, There is a peace supernal, that is peace with God. Thirdly, There is a peace internal, that is a peace with conscience. Fourthly, There is a peace eternal, that is peace in heaven, Psalm xxxvii. 37. 'Make the perfect man, and behold the upright: for the end of that man is peace.'

If you have peace with God, the world and the devil cannot hurt you. And upon the glory shall be defence, Isa. iv. 5. Believers have God for their guard and gain: He that meddles with the saints of God assaults God himself, Zech. ii. 8. He that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of mine eye, he that lifteth

his hand against them, lifts up his hand against God: though they have many enemies, yet they have one friend that hath more strength than all their enemies: a ragged saint is dearer to God, than a glittering emperor that wants grace. Oh! make your peace with the Prince of peace, that in this life you may have the assurance of eternal life, and that eternal death may not be your portion in the other life.

IV. Make religion your main business, and not a by business.

Wherefore the rather brethren, give all diligence to make your calling and election sure; for if you do these things, ye shall never fall, 2 Pet. ii. 1. Work out your salvation with fear and trembling, Philip. ii. 12. 'But seek ye first after the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you,' Matth. vi. 33. Oh, why is the glory of this world so much regarded, but because the glory of heaven is so little minded? Oh! what is an earthly in comparison of the heavenly kingdom? The angels themselves, though they are glorious spirits, yet they are ministering spirits.

Do not most men of the world make light of God, and of Christ, and the Spirit, and heaven, and their precious souls? And he sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding, and they would not come. Again, he sent forth other servants, saying, Tell them that are bidden, Behold, I have prepared my dinner, my oxen, and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready, come unto the marriage. But they made light of it, and went their ways, one to his farm, and another to his merchandise, Matth. xxii. 3, 4, 5.

Wretched worldlings make religion a by-business, they will hear, read and pray, when they have nothing else to do. O that such men did but know what everlasting glory, and everlasting torments are, would they do as they do? Oh! that they did but know the worth of their souls, and the want of a Saviour; the shortness of their time, and the greatness of their work,

work, would they then neglect God, and their own souls as they do?

O friends! let me beseech you to whom I write, to make religion your main business, hearing, reading, praying, believing, and doing your main business. 'Labour not for the meat that perisheth, but for the meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give you; for him hath God the Father sealed.' John vi. 27.

V. Do nothing in this world, but what ye can answer for in another world.

For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in the body, according to that which he hath done, whether it be good or bad, 2 Cor. v. 10. On the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel, Rom. ii. 16. He hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained, Acts xvii. 31. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil. Eccl. xii. 14. Oh, for the Lord's sake, my dear brethren, let nothing be done by you in this world, but what may be answered for you in another world.

Many men do that in this world, which they cannot answer for in another world. Now they contemn God, blaspheme God, rebel against God, go a whoring from God, and persecute the beloved of God. Instead of protecting the saints, imprison the saints, and are more far crushing them, than comforting them: instead of visiting them, vilify them: and instead of affecting them, afflict them, and eat them up as they eat bread, Psalm xiv. 4. And will not suffer them to worship the true God in spirit and in truth, but mock them, Heb. xi. 26. Threaten them, Acts iv. 29. Accuse them, Acts xxiv. 5. Slander them, Matth. v. 11. Curse them, Matth. 5. 44. Beat them, Acts v. 40. Imprison them, Acts iv. 3. Plunder them, Heb. x. 34. Banish them, Heb. xi. And many

them, Rom. viii. 36. All this the poor innocent suffer, whilst swearing, cursing, whoring, robbing, blaspheming, drunkenness, and gluttony, and all manner of debauchery, yea, murder itself walks unpunished in the streets, and only he that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey. What a wonder then, if such as these shall one day hide themselves in dens and holes, "and cry to the rocks and mountains to fall upon them, and hide them from the face of him that sits upon the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb?" Rev. vi. 15, 16. Oh! what will persecutors do. When Jesus Christ shall appear in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know him not, and obey not his gospel?" 2 Thes. i. 8. Will they not then be dumb and speechless, and have never a word to say for themselves, as that man that had not on the wedding-garment? Matth. xxii. 12.

But, Oh beloved, let that grace that hath appeared to all men, teach us to deny ungodliness, and worldly lusts, that we live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world, Tit. ii. 11, 12. Following the Lamb, resisting Satan, shunning sin, separating from the world.

VI. Make the word of God your rule, and the Spirit of God your guide.

To the law, and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them, Isa. viii. 20. We have also a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts, 2 Pet. i. 19. All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, 2 Tim iii. 16. Howbeit when the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth; for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak, and he will shew you things to come. John vi. 13. The scripture is a rule before us, to shew us where we must go; the Spirit is a word behind us,

to enable us to go according to the directions of the word. The word of God is a compass, by which we must direct our course; the Spirit is the great Pilot that steers us in this course. We have no eyes to see the word, till the Spirit enlighten them: we have no ears to hear the word, till the Spirit open them: we have no hearts to obey the word, till the Spirit bow and incline them. By the word of God we know the mind of the Spirit; and by the efficacy of the Spirit, we feel the efficacy of the word; the word of God shews us the way, and the Spirit of God leads us in that way which the Spirit points out. The Spirit of God is able to expound the word of God, and make it plain to our understanding. The holy Ghost is the church's interpreter, he gave the scriptures, and he can reveal unto us the sense and meaning of the scriptures. The word is God's counsellor, to discover the path in which we are to walk; the Spirit is the counsel of God, that teacheth us to walk in the path. The word is a crystal glass, which shews us our duty; if God had not put his Spirit into our hearts, as well as his word into our mouths, we should never have arrived at the fair haven of peace. Augustin calls the scriptures, "The epistle of God to the creatures by which we understand the very heart of God. God Almighty hath in the sacred scriptures, as it were unbowelled himself and unfolded all his counsel to the creatures, as far as is necessary to be known for their direction and guidance to everlasting life."

There be many that walk by false rules. First Some by opinions. (2.) Some by customs. (3.) Some by providence. (4.) Some by conscience. (5.) Some by their own reason. (6.) Some by mens experience. (7.) Some by their lusts. But O my dear friends, let me beseech you to walk by none of these false rules, but keep close to the word and Spirit of God.

VII Be faithful and fruitful.

Therefore my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast and unmoveable, always abounding in the work

the Lord, for as much as you know your labour is not in vain, 1 Cor. xv. 58. Every tree that beareth not good fruit, is hewen down and cast into the fire. Christians may be fruitful and not slothful. See that ye bring forth good fruit, and much fruit.

First, sincerity, which is not a single grace, but the soul of grace, 'Behold thou desirest the truth in the inward parts,' Psalm li. 6.

Secondly, Humility, a grace much prevailing with God for the obtaining all graces, 'Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me for I am meek and lowly of heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls,' Matth. xi. 29.

Thirdly, Prudence, the patient Christian is the best for waiting; but the prudent Christian is the best for working. 'Be ye wise as serpents, and harmless as doves,' Matth. x. 16. We must have innocency with our wisdom, else our wisdom is but craftiness. And we must have wisdom with our innocency, else our innocency is but weakness. We must have the harmlessness of doves, that we may not wrong others; and we must have the prudence of the serpent, that others may not abuse and circumveen us, not to wrong the truth by silence, here is the innocency of the dove: not to betray ourselves by rashness, here is the wisdom of the serpent.

Fourthly, Patience, here is the patience of the saints, Rev. xiii. 10. and xiv. 10. The way to bring the world under us, is to be patient under them.

Fifthly, self denial, 'If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me,' Matth. xvi. 24.

Be faithful in your promises, and in your purposes, be faithful to the ways of God, and cause of God, O do not begin with the Lamb, and end with the beast: 'Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life,' Rev. ii. 20. Keep your lights burning, and lamps shining, your loins girded, your consciences awakened, your garments unstained, and your spiritual armour constantly on, and closely girt.

VIII. Have

VIII. Have a care of reporting, and believing the world's reports of the people of God.

Those that have good conscience, have not always a good name. The people of God in this life are called by the wicked, the troublers of Israel, seditious, rebellious, and what not, an old device of that old serpent to persuade the troublers of Israel upon Elijah, the chariot of Israel, 1 Kings xviii. 17. 2 Kings ii. 23. Jeremiah for speaking against their sins and wickedness, and denouncing God's judgments against them, is judged worthy of death, Jer. xxvi. 8, 9. So Jer. xxxviii. 4. The wicked nobles petition the king to murder him, under the pretence that he sought not the good of the people but their hurt. So Amos for speaking against the abominations of the king's court, is charged with treason against the king's person, Amos vii. 10, 13. So Paul and Silas, for preaching up the kingly power of Jesus Christ, are accused by the envious Jews, and rude multitude, for turning the world upside down, and breaking the decrees of Cesar; yea, Christ himself had this laid to his charge. Mark what the Jews say of him, 'And they began to accuse him, saying, We have found this fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Cesar, saying, that he himself is Christ a King,' Luke xxiii. 2. Mat. xxvii. 8. And for this have the servants of God in all ages been accursed and persecuted, killed and stoned, Mat. xxvii. 28. Acts viii. 52. Now if they did so to the green tree, no wonder if they do it to the dry. If the Lord and Master was called an enemy to Cesar, no wonder if those of his household be called so; our integrity will not secure us from infamy: the choicest of professors have had black marks in the world's calendar. It is usual for those who live in treason and rebellion against the King of heaven, to slander his servants with treason and rebellion against the kings of the earth.

But my dear brethren take heed of this, for as the death of the saints is precious, so the names of the saints are precious in God's account. The world will rather a hundred lies upon the Lord's people, men shall

revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake, Mat. v. 11. 2 Tim. ii. 8. Wicked men hate them most that God loves most: but God will roll away the reproaches of his people, he will cause their iniquity and righteousness to break forth as the sun at noon day, and their names shall be in everlasting remembrance. Yea, at that great day, God will clear their innocency before men and angels, and all the world.

IX. Keep in with God, now men are out with you, But it is good for me to draw near to God: I have put my trust in the Lord God, that I may declare all thy works, Psalm lxxiii. 28. He that dwelleth under the shadow of the most High, no plague shall come nigh him, He will give his angels charge over thee, Psalm cxi. 10, 11. Tho' the fig-tree should not blossom, and tho' there be no fruit in the vine, tho' the labour of the olive should fail, and the fields shall yield no meat, the flocks should be cut off from the fold, and the herd from the stall: Yet will I rejoice in the Lord, I will triumph in the God of my salvation, Hab. iii. 17, 19.

The name of the Lord is a strong tower, and the righteous runneth into it, and are safe, James iv. 8. Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. This is a great comfort to the people of God, tho' they be as lillies among thorns, and as sheep among wolves, that they have a God to go to, 'Come my people enter into thy chambers, and shut thy door about thee, hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast,' Isa. xxvi. 20. Let the world grow and friends forsake you, God can sweeten all your enjoyments keep in God's way, and you will be sure of God's protection. Do you keep God's precepts, and God will keep your persons. Do what God commands, and avoid what God forbids, and then you need not fear what man can do unto you, if you would leave God to take care of you; you must cast your care upon God, wait on him, and walk with him, obey his precepts, and believe his promises.

O beloved! let wicked men fall out with us, and hate

hate us, and reprove us, and punish us as much as they will, if ye keep in with God; therefore, my beloved, above all things get communion with God, and keep communion with God; communion with God will yield you two heavens; a heaven upon earth, and a heaven after death. All saints shall enjoy a heaven when they leave the earth: some shall enjoy a heaven whilst they are on the earth. He enjoys nothing that wants communion with God.

X. Live above the love of life, and the fear of death. 'For whosoever will save his life, shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, shall find it.' Mat. xvi. 25. 'If any man come to me, and hate his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple,' Luke xiv. 26. He that loves Christ more than his life, will be sure to save and keep both: He that goes out of God's way to avoid dangers, shall certainly meet with danger. 'Ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a price, therefore glorify God in your bodies, and in your spirits, which are God's,' 1 Cor. vi. 19, 20.

My dear friends, let us live above suffering and fear, tho' we cannot live without suffering: In the world of woe you shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world, John xvi. 33. He that loves Christ above life, will let life go rather than Christ too. Consider my beloved, Christ, and the cloud of witnesses and martyrs that are gone before, and passed down in sin and thro' all those floods, and safely arrived to shore, are now in heaven with God, and Christ, and have been angels, where there is fulness of joy and pleasures evermore. 'Thou wilt shew me the path of life, thy presence is fulness of joy, and at thy right hand are pleasures for evermore,' Psalm xvi. 11. Oh, what joy that they enjoy! Oh, the rivers of consolation that flow from God! 'Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple, and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst

st any more, neither shall the sun light on them
any heat : For the Lamb which is in the midst of
throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto
fountains of living waters, and God shall wipe away
tears from their eyes,' Rev. vii. 12, 16, 17. Who
they that shall have all this honour and glo-
ry and joy and blessedness in heaven ? For this see
Rev. 14. ' These are they which came out of great
tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made
them white in the blood of the Lamb.' The sweet-
ness of the crown which believers shall receive, will
amends for the bitterness of the cross
they have carried.

Desire better hearts more than better times.
O Jerusalem, wash thine heart from wickedness,
thou mayest be saved : how long shall thy vain
thoughts lodge within thee ? Jer. iv. 14. For out
of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adul-
teries, fornication, thefts, false witness, blasphemies,
these are the things which I have hated, saith the Lord.
The heart is deceitful above all
things, and desperately wicked, who can know it ?
xvii. 19.

beloved, instead of reforming, we are complain-
ing of wicked men, more, of the wickedness of their
hearts, more than our apostacy ; of their injuries
done us more than our injuries against God. We
complain too much upon second causes, or complain of
of arguments not of ourselves. We have been of a long
time in sinning, and we had need be a long time in
reforming. The times had not been so bad, had we
been so bad, the times would soon be better, if
we were but better.

beloved, we have sinned such sins as unright-
eous men could not sin, against the clear light, and
the best love : The better God hath been to us, the
greater we have been to him : he hath loaded us with
mercies, and we have wearied him with our sins,
let us blame ourselves more, and the time less ;
turn unto the Lord, that he may turn unto us
and mercy. Let our hearts go out to him,
that

that his heart may come unto us. Oh! beg and for better hearts, that you may serve God better, broken hearts, for sincere hearts, for it is that look at, and calls for, Prov. xxiii. 26. 'My son, me thy heart. Our hearts are always out of tune to serve God, but never out of tune to serve sin: for we had never so good times, and not good hearts, world rather hurt us, than bless us.

XII. Grow downward in humility, and inward sincerity.

'Unto me who am less than the least of all saints is this grace given, that I should preach among Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, Eph. i. Whosoever shall exalt himself, shall be abased: he that shall humble himself, shall be exalted, Mat. xxiii. 12. Put on therefore, (as the elect of God, dearly and beloved) bowels of mercy, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering, Col. iii. Be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud and gives grace to the humble. Humble yourselves therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time,' 1 Pet. v. 5. 6. Be subject up your will to God, that God may bring down your will to you, be low in your own eyes, keep a low esteem of yourselves, abhor pride and flee from it, be inwardly sincere, as well as outwardly humble. Do not look heaven ward by your profession, hell ward by your conversation. He that lives in sin is dead in sin, Eph. ii. 1. 'Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity,' Gal. vi. 24. Let your hearts be upright with God, walk as those that have God for their portion: knowing there are many eyes upon you, the eye of God, the eye of Christ, the eye of angels, the eye of saints, the eye of the world, and the devil eyes: you therefore walk wisely and sincerely: be like the wise daughter all glorious within, Plal. xlv. 12. She is all glorious within, though within is not all her glory, her clothing is wrought of gold: do not think yourselves good, because others think so. Alas! the

mens confidence of us, are poor evidences of heaven. The best testimony is that within us, and above us, see therefore that ye grow in grace, and delight in holiness, bring forth much fruit, live still as before the living God. Take heed of hypocrisy and apostacy. Make it your daily business to walk with God. Be much in the exercise of humility. Humility will exceedingly adorn your profession. Do not place religion in a few good words, when the substance is neglected, but live as ye would die: live to-day, as if you were to die to-morrow.

XIII. Do good to those that be good.

'He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good, and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God, Micah vi. 8. That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate, 1 Tim. vi. 18. But to do good, and to communicate forget not; for with such sacrifices God is well pleased, Heb. xiii. 16. Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father, is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their afflictions, James i. 22. Forget not to contribute to the necessities of the poor saints,' think that God hath given you your estates for such a time as this.

Oh, beloved, what an opportunity have you now to do good, if Satan do not hinder you! Are there not many of Christ's ministers now in want, and members in want, some in prison, and some out of prison. 'Remember these that are in bonds, as bound with them, and them that suffer adversity, being yourselves also in the body,' Heb. xiii. 3. There be many men that have a great deal of this world's wealth and riches, and goods in their hands, and in their houses, but they have no grace in their hearts, and therefore they do not good with the goods of this world; they live so unfruitful that their lives are scarce worth a prayer, nor their deaths scarce worth a tear. Men may as well go to hell for not doing good, as for doing evil. He that bears not good fruit, is as well fewel for hell, as he

that bears bad. You may not be outwardly bad, yet not inwardly good. You may be as far from good as from vice, men are not so much sent to hell for doing evil, as for not doing good. 'For I was an hungry, and ye gave me no meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink,' Mat. xxv. 42. The rich glutton was in hell's torments not for persecuting Lazarus. Men were cursed by the angel, not because they fought against the Lord, but because they came not to help the Lord against the mighty. Judg. v. 23. It is one of the greatest mercies in the world, for God to give an heart to do good with what he hath given him.

Oh, beloved, be always doing good, and hate evil, look not only where you may get good, but where you may do good. Labour to be helpful to the souls of others, and supply the wants of others.

XIV. Choose chastisement before defilement.

'Moses when he was come to years refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, Heb. xi. 25. For ye had compassion on me in my bonds, and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing yourselves, that you have in heaven a better, and an enduring substance,' Heb. xi. 34. So the three children chose burning in the fiery furnace, before bowing to the golden image, Dan. iii. 16, 17, 18. 'We are not careful to answer thee in this matter. If it be so our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thy hand, O king: but if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.' So Daniel chose suffering before sinning. And it is said of those in Heb. xi. 35. 'They accepted not of deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection; and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection.'

Oh! beloved, there is more evil in the least sin against Christ, than in the greatest suffering for Christ.

First, Our sufferings for Christ are but light, 2 Cor. 17. (2.) But short, but for a moment. (3.) Christ redeems us in our sufferings. (4.) Our sufferings are rewarded by the Father. (5.) Our sufferings shall not hurt our souls. (6.) God gives us the best of comforts in the worst of times: we have most of consolation in God, when we have most of tribulation from him: as our sufferings do abound, so our consolations do abound. When the burden is heaviest upon the neck, then the peace of conscience is sweetest, and truest within. Therefore my dear brethren, keep yourselves out of the puddle of this world, and from the peril of this world, and if you must sin or suffer, suffer before sinning.

XV. Think not the worse of godliness, because it is frowned upon: nor the better of ungodliness, because it is smiled upon.

For bodily exercise profiteth little; but godliness is profitable unto all things, having the promise of life that now is, and of that which is to come, 1 Tim. iv. 8. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung that I may win Christ, Philip. iii. 8. And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them, Eph. v. 11. For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord, Rom. vi. 23.

Oh, friends, think not the worse of holiness because it is reproached, and scorned, and persecuted by wicked men and devils, nor the better of wickedness, because wicked men love it, and follow it, and say, 'It is in the way to serve God, and what profit is it that we have in his ordinances, and that we have walked uprightly before the Lord of hosts?' Mal. iii. 14. But there is a time coming, when ungodly men would be glad to have some of that holiness that now they despise: but they shall be as far from obtaining it, as they are now in desiring it. Let us therefore love holiness, and

hate wickedness: 'For without holiness no man shall see the Lord,' Heb. xii. 13. Holiness is the only way to happiness. We must not dress ourselves for this world, by the looking glass of this world: Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil, Exod. xxi. 2. 'For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is their shame, and who mind earthly things, Philippians 18, 19. The children of God must be harmless in their actions, and blameless in their walkings.

XVI. Prize the word of God by the worth of it, that you may never come to prize the word of God by the want of it.

'How sweet are thy words unto my taste? how much sweeter than honey to my mouth, Psalm cxix. 103. It is sweeter than the honey, and the honey-comb, Psalm xix. 10. O how do I love thy law! Psalm cxix. 97. I love thy commandments above gold; yea, above fine gold. The law of thy mouth is better unto me, than thousands of gold and silver, verse 104. As new born babes desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby, 1 Pet. ii. 2. Let the word of God dwell richly in you; not only in your hearts, but in you, Col. iii. 16. Oh! let us with esteem the word of God above our necessary food, Job xxiv. 12. And with David, above our gold and silver.' The delight of a saint in God's word, tops all his creature-delights; wicked men can delight in the creatures of God, but none in the word of God; they can delight in the gifts of God, but none in God of gifts. Oh! let us love the word, let us prize the word; it is the sun of the Christian world, as the sun is the light of the natural world, and without the sun the world is but a chaos, and a dungeon of darkness; so the word of God, is the light of the spiritual world, without which a Christian is in eternal night. Take away the scriptures, and there will be no certain rule to direct men what is to be done, or

to be believed. All false ways are here discovered, sins are here forbidden, all holiness is here commanded: here you may see every action and motion of our lives, as a step to life, or a step to death: as a step heaven ward, or a step hell ward. Oh! therefore prize and obey the word: (1.) It is a plain word. (2.) It is a perfect word. (3.) It is a sure word. (4.) It is an uniform word. (5.) It is a powerful word: it is the favour of life, unto life, unto them that believe.

O beloved! let us read the word, and abide in the word: 'If ye continue in the word, then are ye my disciples, John viii. 31. The less now you hear, the more do you read, that little book of the Revelation, and Daniel especially.

XVII. Have a care of the whore of Babylon's golden cup, and sweet wine.

'And the woman was arrayed in purple, and scarlet colour; and decked with gold and precious stones, and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand, full of abominations, and filthiness of her fornication, Rev. xiii. 4. And the serpent cast out of his mouth, water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood,' Rev. xii. 13.

Let me beseech you to have a care of this, and keep yourselves from this; be like the virgin spouse of Christ, which followeth him wheresoever he goeth. My dear friends keep yourselves from four things.

First, From false teachers. The devil hath his ministers as well as Christ; 'Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheeps clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves, Matth. vii. 15. Yea, they are greedy dogs, which can never have enough, and they are shepherds that cannot understand: they all look to their own way, every one for his gain from his quarter,' Isa. lvi. 11. Oh! false teachers do not feed the flock, but fleece the flock: they do not convert, but pervert: they do not season, but poison: they do not edify to salvation, but edify to damnation: instead of curing souls,

they kill souls; so if they have but the peoples goods, they care not though the devil have their souls: they are neither rightly called, nor rightly qualified, nor rightly ordained: their course is evil, and therefore it is not right, Jer. xiii. 10. They are the dogs and wolves combining together, to massacre the flock of Christ. Oh! therefore keep yourselves from Babylon's merchants, that make merchandise of the souls of men, Rev. xviii. 13. Oh! the sins of teachers are the teachers of sin.

Secondly, From false doctrine. 'But there were false prophets among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction, 2 Pet. ii. 1. Be not carried away with divers and strange doctrines; for it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace, not with meats which have not profited them that have been occupied therein,' Heb. xiii. 9.

I beseech you also in the Lord, my brethren, that you do not carnally comply with, nor superstitiously conform to the inventions of men: 'But stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free,' Gal. v. 1.

Thirdly, From false worship. 'If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone, in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb, Rev. xiv. 9. 10. Ye worship ye know not what; God is a Spirit, and they that worship him, must worship him in Spirit and in truth, John iv. 22, 24. As there be some in the world that worship false gods, so there be others that worship the true God with false worship: they that worship the beast, worship the devil, Rom. xiii. Oh! Meddle not with false worship, with vain worship, and

will worship: worship God as he teacheth us to worship him. Our work is to depend on Christ's work, our outward working is to depend on God's inward working.

Fourthly, From false opinion, from error and sedition. Let your hearts be upright, your judgments sound, and your lives holy; love the truth, and obey the truth, and hold fast the truth: now beloved, let me beseech you for God's sake, and for Christ's sake, and for your souls sake, keep yourselves from false teachers, from false doctrine, from false worship, from false opinions: if you will be tasting and sipping at Babylon's cup, you must resolve to receive more or less of Babylon's plagues.

XVIII. Be one with every one that is one with Christ.

'Endeavour to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling: one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, Eph. iv. 3, 4, 5, 6. Every one that loveth him that begeth, loveth him also that is begotten of him. By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep his commandments, 1 John v. 1, 2. He that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?' 1 John iv. 20.

Oh! consider what dishonour it is to the gospel, that those that profess themselves sons of the same God, members of the same Christ, temples of the same Spirit, heirs of the same glory, should be at jarring one with another? It is strange and unnatural, that lilies should prove thorns to one another, that those who are saints in profession should be devils in practice one to another: that God's diamond should cut one another? For wolves to devour the lambs is no wonder; but for lambs to destroy one another, is a wonder and monstrous. O that Christians instead of loving one another, should hate one another. O how

unlike are we to that God whom we profess to be our God? He is full of love, full of goodness, and full of mercy and patience. O but Christians cannot bear and forbear one with another. O do not wicked men warm themselves at the sparks of our divisions? and say, It is as we would have it. +

Oh, beloved, hath not God made his wrath to smoke against us for the divisions and heart-burnings that hath been amongst us? Oh, that you would lay this to heart, and throw away all discord and divisions and heart-burnings, and labour for an oneness in love and affection, with every one that is one with Christ. O labour for a healing spirit, you cannot love God, if you do not love the people of God. 'If any man, saith he, loveth God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar. Let brotherly love continue, Heb. xiii. 1. They that feared the Lord, spake often one to another.' Mal. iii. 16. Christ's doves should flock together. There be many that cannot love a man, unless he be of their opinion, or a member of their church, tho' he be a member of Christ. Every man hath a good opinion of his own opinion, but alas, beloved, it is not this opinion, nor that opinion, nor this way, nor that way, will bring a man to heaven without faith in Christ: and he that hath faith in Christ, hath a right to all the ordinances of Christ and promises of Christ, and privileges of Christ. Therefore let me beseech you to love every man that is a godly man, let him be of what way and form he will: 'And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart, and of one soul,' Acts iv. 32. +

XIX. Love Christ with a love stronger than life, who loved us with a love stronger than death.

Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I may take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself: I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again, John x. 17, 18. This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, 1 Tim.

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Christ's love to us was stronger than death. He died for love: he laid down his life to save our lives, he loves us as the Father loves him, John xv. 9. 'As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love.' Oh, the scripture hath exceeding high expressions of his affections to us: now beloved, he died for us, and suffered for us, and set his heart upon us to love us, and to delight in us, how ought we then to love him again? 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, Mat. xxii. 37. Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon the earth that I desire besides thee, Psal. lxxii. 25. Unto you therefore which believe, he is precious,' 1 Pet. ii. 17. O let our hearts be full of love and affection to Christ: Love will breed courage, and cast out slavish fear before God, and carnal fear before men; cannot keep us from the torments of men, but men cannot keep us from the torments of God; whilst we stand by God, God hath promised to stand by us: therefore be not afraid of an authority, that stands in opposition to the authority of Christ: none can promise better than Christ can, none can threaten us worse than Christ can. Can any one promise us a better thing than heaven? and any man threaten us with worse than hell? Heaven is promised to them that love him, and hell is to be the portion of those that hate him.

Oh! my dear brethren let us love him with a love stronger than death: So did Paul and the rest of the apostles, 'Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Rom. viii. 35. 'Love is stronger than death, many waters cannot quench it, neither can the floods drown it,' Cant. viii. 6, 7.

XX. Be every day as serious in your preparations for death, as it were to be your last day.

'All the days of my appointed time will I wait till my change come, Job xiv. 14. This night thy

soul shall be required of thee, Luke xii. 20. For what is your life? It is even a vapour that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away, James iv. 14. Behold thou hast made my days an hand-breadth, and mine age is as nothing before thee: verily every man at his best state is altogether vanity,' Psalm lix. 5.

As no saint knows when that time and hour shall be, so no wicked man knows when it shall be. To live without the fear of death is to die living. To labour not to die is to labour in vain. Men are afraid to die in such and such sins, but not afraid to live in such and such sins. Oh! the hell of horror and terrors that attend those souls that have their greatest work to do when they come to die! therefore as ye would be happy at death, and everlastingly blessed after death, prepare and set yourselves for death. Did Christ die for us, that we might live with him, and shall not we desire to die, and be with him? A believer's dying-day is his crowning-day. 'And I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me, write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, from henceforth; yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours, and their works do follow them,' Rev. xiv. 13.

O! beseech you my brethren, every day spend some time in preparation for, and meditation of death, judgment, hell, heaven, and eternity. Eternity is a sum that never can be numbered, a line that can never be measured: Eternity is a condition of everlasting sorrow, or everlasting joy. O think on this, and prepare for this every day, before the night of death comes.

And thus my beloved, I have given you these twenty precious directions for your souls.

I shall leave this book with you as a legacy of my dearest love: my desire in all this is your happiness here, and your blessedness hereafter.

My earnest and humble desire of you is, that you would mind this book, and my former treatises, not only read them, but reform your lives by them.

do your duty, and live in your duty, love your duty. That you may be made meet to be made partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light; which is, and shall be the earnest and constant prayer of one that esteems it a most glorious privilege, to be of the number of those that follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth.

WILLIAM DYER.

FOLLOW THE LAMB.

REV. xiv. 4. These are they which follow the Lamb, whithersoever he goeth.

THE title of this book tells us, It is the Revelation of John, and John tells us, Chap. i. 1. It is the revelation of Jesus Christ, Christ's revelation to John, and John's revelation to us.

The command of this book is set forth, Chap. i. 19. 'Write these things that are, and the things that shall be hereafter.'

And into these two parts this book is divided.

First, A revelation of the things that referred to the seven churches of Asia.

Secondly, A revelation of the general state of the church to come, and from John's time unto the second coming of the Lord.

The words of this book are the true sayings of the true God: they are therefore true and faithful, Chapter xxii. 6.

The matter of this book so much concerns the good of the church, that Jesus Christ commandeth every one that hath an ear to hear, to hearken what the Spirit of God saith to the churches; and to shew how earnest Jesus Christ is to have all his members and servants acquainted with the things revealed in this book, this charge he repeats eight times over as this book shews, Chap. ii. 11, 17, 29. and viii. 6. 22. and xiii. 9.

A blessing is pronounced upon the hearer, reader, and doer of these things written in this book. Chap.

2. O what can be said more, or more effectually to stir us up to hear and read than blessedness? And blessed is he that keepeth the words of the prophecy of this book,' Chap. xxii. 7. But how shall we keep them except we know them? and how shall we know them, except we read them?

The excellency of this book is such as neither man nor angel, none in heaven nor earth, or under the earth was found worthy so much as to look into it, till Jesus Christ went and took it out of his Father's hand to open it to us, Chapter. v. 3.

The blessed St. John could not but weep for fear, lest this book should have been kept close from him, and the church, so earnest was he to know these things which we neglect to know, Chapter v. 4.

This book is a most precious jewel which Christ hath bestowed upon his church in the latter days; and it is our great duty to look into it, and read it, and study it, and open it, and expound it, that all the people may be acquainted with it; especially in these times: for now in this age is, and shall be the very heat of the war, and brunt of the battle betwixt God and Belial, betwixt Christ and antichrist, betwixt the Lamb's followers and the beast's followers. Now this book layeth all open, and plainly telleth us what shall be the issue and success in the day of battle, which side shall have the victory, and which side shall go down, Chapter xvii. 19. And certainly the sons of Belial shall not prevail, the date of their being is almost out; and their time draweth on apace, wherein both they and their beast shall be laid in the dust.

This book sheweth us the rising of the beast, the declining of the beast, and ruin of the beast, Chap. xviii.

Our Lord Jesus hath shewed us in this book, the sorrows and sufferings and afflictions, and tribulations, which the church was to meet with in the latter time, Chap. xi. 17, and xii. 14, 15. and xiii. 7.

And her deadly and cruel enemies, the whore of Babylon

Babylon, the mother of harlots, the beast, the false prophet, and the great red dragon, which maketh war against her, and casteth her floods after her, Chapter xii. 16.

This book sheweth us likewise the true state of the true church upon earth, and what she is, where she is, how she is; and what she shall be hereafter; and that before the slaying, under the slaying, and after the slaying.

First, Before the slaying time, the true church is in the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared for her of God, that they should feed her a thousand two hundred and threescore days, Chapter xii. 2.

Before the slaying of the witnesses, the true worshippers of God are in a low condition, in heaviness and sadness, in sackcloth and ashes, in a mourning and suffering state, being scattered and dispersed here and there, as Israel was of old. But though this be the condition of the poor woman in the wilderness, yet she is not without comfort, she may take comfort in three things.

(1.) That God prepared a place for her.

(2.) That God nourisheth her, and locketh her up in his chamber of providence.

(3.) That God numbered her days of suffering: the tribulations of the saints in the old Testament is reckoned up still by years; as the bondage of Egypt, four hundred and thirty years, and the captivity of Babylon seventy years. But under the new Testament by days, Ye shall have tribulation ten days, Chapter ii. 10. And the two witnesses shall be dead three days and a half, Chapter xi. 9. So the woman was to be in the wilderness, a thousand two hundred and threescore days.

The church is compared to a woman, for four reasons.

1st, As a woman is weak and feeble, so is the church and can do nothing without Christ, John xv. 5.

2dly, As a woman is useful and fruitful, so is the church, John xv. 2.

3dly,

3dly, As a woman is fair and beautiful, so is the church, Ezek. xvi. 13.

4thly, As a woman is full of love and affection, so is the church, Cant. ii. 5.

First, Under the slaying times the worshippers of God, and witnesses of Jesus Christ lay dead on the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, Chap. xi. 8. That is in antichristian kingdoms and dominions. 'The woman which sitteth upon the seven hills, which reigneth over the kings of the earth, Chap. xvii. 18. She is called Sodom for her filthiness and wickedness; and Egypt for her cruelty and oppression, Chap. xvii. 18.

The true servants of God, and members of Jesus Christ, that bare witness for him against the evils of the beast, and against the evils of the world, are called two witnesses. 1st. Because of the fewness of them. 2dly, Because two is a number sufficient to bear witness, John viii. 17. 3dly, because antichristian beasts are called two, Chap. xiii. 4. They are called two witnesses for six reasons.

First, Because their work is to bear witness for Christ and his truth, against the world, and the flesh, and the devil. A true believer is to bear a threefold testimony to, and for Christ; a word testimony, a life testimony, and a blood testimony, Heb. x. 20. John v. 33.

Secondly, Christ's members are called two witnesses. Because they stand up for Christ to maintain his name, his honour, his cause, his truth, his worship, his glory in the world, Dan. iii. 16, 17, 18. Chap. vi. 'And ye killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead, whereof we are witnesses, Acts v. 15. Be it known unto you all, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead: even by him doth this man stand before you here whole,' Acts iv. 10, 11.

Thirdly, The Lamb's followers are called two witnesses, Because they keep the testimony of Jesus Christ.

Rev. xiii. 16. and vi. 9. A testimony of all the offices works, and kingdoms of Jesus Christ, as King of saints, and King of nations.

Fourthly, God's chosen and precious ones are called witnesses, because they do appear boldly and openly for his truth; they own it, they love it, they publish it, they hold it fast, and suffer for it, who through the teaching of the Spirit in the word, and by the power of the same Spirit, are found in the practice of Christ's appointment, they cannot deny the truth, which is a testimony to it, Acts xxiv. 14.

Fifthly, The true worshippers of God are called witnesses, because they do bear witness against the beast, and all the whole mystery of iniquity: against the whore of Babylon, who hath committed fornication with the kings of the earth, and make herself drunk with the blood of the saints, Rev. xvii. 6. Christ's faithful witnesses bear an eminent testimony against all the abominations and filthiness, and wickedness, against the pope, his government, his clergy, his doctrine, his worship, his religion, and all his abominable proceedings, Rev. xix. 7.

Sixthly, Christ's redeemed ones are called witnesses, because in dying they bear witness for him; for to die for the truth is a living standing testimony to it. He who for Christ's sake loves not his life unto the death, dies a most glorious witness of Christ, Chap. iii. 11. 'And they loved not their lives unto the death, and the beast that came out of the bottomless pit made war against them, and overcame them, and killed them, Chap. xi. 7.

Antichrist riseth in a double beast, in his civil power, and in his ecclesiastical power. First, In his civil power so he makes up one beast, with the ten kings, of Chap. xvii. 12. 'And this is the beast that riseth out of the sea; which hath seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy. And the beast which I saw, was like unto a leopard, and his feet was as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion, and the

the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority. Chap. xiii. 1, 2.

Secondly, In his ecclesiastical power, so he made up another beast, the clergy: and this is that beast that rose up out of the earth: he hath two horns like a lamb, and he spake like a dragon, verse 11.

Now these two monstrous beasts, antichrist's magistrates and ministers, slay the faithful witnesses of Jesus Christ, and rejoice over their dead bodies, and make merry and send gifts one to another, Chap. 10. Oh, how do graceless, faithless, and Christless men rejoice at the afflictions and calamities of God's people? saying, 'Where is now your God, and Christ your King?' Psalm xlii. 10.

As touching the nature of the witnesses' death, they are not to conceive thereof, as though the same were to be corporally killing or slaying, but a civil killing or slaying; not so much their bodies, as their testimonies, deprive and strip them of their liberty, worship, ordinance, religion, and the free exercise of their gifts, suffering not a servant of Jesus Christ to bear a testimony, against the abominations of a beast, nor against her national wickedness, but make laws against them, and lay in wait for them, stop their mouths, and imprisoning their bodies, beat and hunting them up and down, afflicting and tormenting them; and taking possession of their possessions; killing and slaying them all day long, and accounting them as sheep for the slaughter, Revelation viii. 13.

This is to be broken in the place of dragons, and covered with the shadow of death, Psalm xlii. 1. This is to be killed all the day long; and upon the account the witnesses are said to be slain. And after three days and a half, the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet, and great fear fell upon them that saw them, Chap. xi. 14.

A spirit of boldness and courage, zeal and uprightness, and resolution to appear for Christ, and

se against antichrist and the whole brood, Therefore rejoice all ye saints, and be glad all ye upright heart; though the witnesses be dead, they will not stay be dead, but rise again.

) After the slaying time, the church is with the Lamb on mount Sion, Chap. xiv. 1. 'And I looked, lo, a Lamb stood on mount Sion, and with him hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads; which notes the star, 'Those that trust in the Lord, shall be on mount Sion which cannot be moved,' Psalm 125. 1.

Before the slaying time, the church is very low; under the slaying time lower, but after the slaying the church is very high, she is rejoicing, shining and triumphing on mount Sion, 'And they sung, were a new song before the throne, and before four beasts, and the elders, and no man could sing that song, but the hundred forty and four thousand which were redeemed from the earth.' The true church having gotten the glorious presence of the Lamb, and the Lamb in the midst of her, and having gotten some victory over the beast, she do rejoice mightily.

And I heard a voice of harpers, harping with organs.

this is not till after the resurrection of the witnesses; and when the witnesses are risen, the church is exceedingly joyful.

This chapter out of which my text is taken, contains six principal things.

First, A lovely description of Jesus Christ, and he is described by the similitude of a Lamb, Lo, a Lamb upon mount Sion, verse 4. 'And behold the Lamb of God,' John i. 29.

He is called a Lamb in a double respect, First, In respect of his innocency, 1 Pet. i. 19. Secondly, In respect of his meekness and patience, Acts viii. 22. Thirdly, a lively description of the church, the bride of the Lamb, and that from verse 1. to verse 5.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, A glorious description of the church and her ministers. As the church in this book is called the bride, so her ministers are called angels. And there is another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel. verse 6. And there followed another angel saying, Babylon is fallen, verse 17. And the third angel followed him, saying with a loud voice, &c. verse 9.

Fourthly, Here is set down the doctrine which these angels preach and publish.

The first angel published the free grace of God in Jesus Christ openly against all the inventions of men, saying with a loud voice, Fear God; and give glory to him: and worship him that made heaven and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters, verse 7. Namely that men should once fear God, and worship him, and give all glory to him; none to creatures, none to images, none to antichrist: he that worshippeth the beast, worshippeth the beast and the devil. Chap. xiii.

The second angel proclaimed the utter ruin of Babylon, and the destruction thereof over the world, saying, 'Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication,' verse 8.

The third angel doth seriously and solemnly give warning to all those who shall adhere to the beast, shewing the danger and misery of it. 'If any man worship the beast, and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture, into the cup of his indignation: and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone, in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb,' verse 9, 10.

Fifthly, A sweet word of heavenly consolation to the saints and people of God: 'And I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me, write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, from henceforth, that they may rest from their labours, and their works do follow them,' verse 13.

Sixthly, The judgment and vengeance which shall be executed upon the false church, the spirit doth set forth by a double similitude, the one by reaping, and the other by gathering, that from verse 16. to the end. God will as it were, rain hell out of heaven, upon Bayblon, he hath fire and brimstone for his spiritual Sodom, judgment, without mercy, and fury without compassion.

I shall now come to the words of my text, 'These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth.'

This text is one of the golden characters of the hundred forty and four thousand, which stood with the Lamb upon mount Sion.

In these words are three things, First, The subject, these. Secondly, The act, follow. Thirdly, The Observation, the Lamb whithersoever he goeth.

I shall gather this observation from the words, That it is the sweet temper and frame of souls truly gracious, to follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. In the handling of this point, I shall shew you five things;

First, What it is to follow the Lamb.

Secondly, Why they follow the Lamb.

Thirdly, The excellency of following the Lamb.

Fourthly, The misery of them that follow not the Lamb.

Fifthly How the Lamb's followers may be known from the beast's follower's

First, To follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth, which is to follow him in four things:

First, In his commandments, 'If ye love me, keep my commandments,' John xiv. 15.

'Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you,' Chap. xv. 14.

Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have a right to the tree of life, Rev. xxii.

Oh! beloved, we cannot follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth, unless we follow him in his commandments, 'Then shall I not be ashamed, saith David,

vid, when I have respect unto all thy commandments. Psalm cxix. 6. Christians should take as much delight in those precepts that enjoin holiness, as in the promises that assure happiness.

Secondly, In his teaching. 'My sheep hear my voice and I know them, and they know me. John x. 27. A stranger they will not follow, but will depart from him; for they know not the voice of a stranger,' verse 5.

Thirdly, in his providences; thro' all afflictions, all straits, all discouragements and sorrows whatsoever, tho' it be a way of blood, we must forsake all to follow a crucified Christ, a condemned Christ, bloody paths of suffering, if he calls us to it: 'Y though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me, thy rod and thy staff they comfort me, Psalm xxiii. For saith Paul, I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem, for the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.' We must be willing to venture the loss of all for him, liberty, estates, relations, and life itself; 'We have forsaken all and followed thee, Math. xix. 27.

Fourthly, in his example. 'For I have given you an example that you should do as I have done to you, John xiii. 15. That because Christ hath suffered for us, leaving an example, that we should follow his steps;' 1 Pet. ii. 21. So that to follow Christ's steps is to take him for an example: we must walk in the same spirit, in the same steps, and in the same obedience; we must not follow wicked mens example, who walk in the broad way that leads to death, and are of the father the devil, and his works they do, John viii. 12.

But we must follow our head Christ, who went up and down doing good, Acts x. 38. Now this is to follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth: In his commands, in his teaching, in his providences, in his examples.

Secondly, To follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth, is to follow him truly without hypocrisy, constantly without apostacy.

First, Truly without hypocrisy. Many follow the Lord, as beggars follow a man, only for an alms: they prize the wages of religion, above the works of religion: You seek not me, because of the miracles, but because you did eat of the loaves, and were filled, John vi. 26. Oh, beloved! God abhors an hypocrite more than a Sodomite, and hell is provided a purpose for hypocrites, Mat. xxiv. 51.

My beloved, following the Lamb fully, is to have the heart fixed and resolved for God: My soul followed hard after thee, saith David, Psal. lxxiii. 8. And the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God, Psal. xlii. 1.

All the faculties of his soul are walking after God: My soul, and all that is within me, praise the Lord, saith holy David.

Secondly, Constantly without apostacy.

A true believer after he begins to follow the Lamb he never leaves following him, but followeth him whithersoever he goes; 'Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Rom. viii. 35. Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord,' verses 38, 39. Oh, beloved, he doth not follow the Lamb whithersoever he goes, that follows the Lamb earnestly for a while, but afterwards forsaketh him when the storm ariseth; Yet hath he not root in himself, but endureth for a while; for when tribulation, or persecution ariseth, because of the word, by and by he is offended, Matth. xiii. 21. Nor he that follows the Lamb in some things, and the beast in other things: They fed the Lord and served other gods after the manner of the nations. Nor he that followeth the Lamb in a dull heavy manner, and a lukewarm temper, 'I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot, I would that

that thou wert either cold or hot, Chap. iii. 15. Be astonished, O ye heavens, at this, and be horribly afraid, be very desolate, saith the Lord. For the people have committed two evils, they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and have digged out cisterns, broken cisterns that can hold no water. Jer. ii. 12, 13.

Oh! this is not following the Lamb. To follow the Lord fully, abide in the Word, and come to the Lord, and continue constantly in His love unto the end of their days.

'The righteous shall hold on his way, Job xxviii. 28. Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord,' Hof. vi. 3. The righteous man holds on his way, he follows the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. First, Speedily. (2.) Truly. (3.) Undividedly. (4.) Zealously. (5.) Humbly. (6.) Cheerfully. (7.) Diligently. (8.) Constantly. (9.) Faithfully. (10.) Transcendently.

Now this is to follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth.

Now I shall shew you, why believers follow the Lamb.

First, Because they are redeemed by the blood of the Lamb: 'For as much as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation, received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish, and without spot,' 2 Pet. i. 18, 19.

He paid a price for our redemption, that so he might discharge the debt, our sins.

'And they sang a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to loose the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation,' Rev. v. 9.

There are three things called precious in the scriptures.

First, Faith is called precious, 2 Pet. i. 2.

Secondly,

Secondly, The promises are called precious, ver. 4.

Thirdly, The blood of Christ is called precious, ver. i. 9.

Oh! His blood hath redeemed us from six enemies.

First, From the world, Gal. iv. Rev. xxi.

Secondly, From the curse, Gal. iii. 13.

Thirdly, From sin, Rom. vi. 18, 22.

Fourthly, From the devil, Heb. ii. 18. Acts xxvi. 18.

Fifthly, From the sting of death, 1 Cor. xv. 55, 56.

Sixthly, From hell, 1 Thes. i. 10. Rev. ii. 12.

His blood is precious blood, his blood hath redeemed us from our enemies: he hath purchased by his blood, reconciliation with the Father, union with the Son, communion with the holy Ghost; 'Ye that were sometimes afar off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ,' Eph. ii. 13, 16.

Secondly, They follow the Lamb, because they

were washed in the blood of the Lamb, 'He hath loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood,

ver. i. 5. These are they that came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made

them white in the blood of the Lamb, Rev. xvii. 14.

The blood of Christ cleanseth us from all sin, 1 John

1. Christ's blood washeth away our bloody sins: I

came unto thee, when thou wast in thy blood, Live,

Rev. xvi. 6. For as we were united to Christ, our

righteousness is upon him, and his righteousness upon us: it

is Christ that gives us life, and puts excellent orna-

ments upon us, to cover our nakedness, and decketh

us with jewels, and gems of gold, so we became

beautiful in his sight,' Isa. lx. 10.

That he might present unto himself a glorious

church, not having spot or wrinkle, nor any such

thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish,

Eph. v. 27.

Thirdly, Believers follow the Lamb, because they

are risen with the Lamb: 'If we then be risen with

Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ

sitteth on the right hand of God, Col. iii. 1. There-

fore

fore we were buried with him in baptism unto death, that like as Christ was risen from the dead, by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life, Rom. vi. 4. Every man besides a believer is a dead man in trespasses and in sins,' Eph. 1. Therefore they are exhorted to rise from the dead, Eph. v. 4. They must rise from evil to do good, from earthly-mindedness to heavenly-mindedness, but not by faith, believers are raised from darkness to light. 'For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light, Eph. 5. 8. Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee,' Isa. lx. 1. When the Lord shineth forth upon his people in glorious discoveries of himself, he calls them away from their former condition: when the Lord discovereth himself in a gospel dispensation, his people were no longer to sit under dark clouds of legal ceremonies, but to follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth.

Fourthly, They follow the Lamb, because they are enlightened by the Lamb: 'God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, 2 Cor. iv. 6. But we all with open face beholding as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord, 2 Cor. iii. 18. Yea, doubtless, I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung; that I may win Christ,' Phil. iii. 8. Divine and heavenly knowledge brings men near to God, it gives a man the clearest and fullest sight of God: and the nearer any man comes to God, the clearer vision he have of God, and the more communion with God.

The reason why others follow not the Lamb, because they see not the worth and want of the Lamb, having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that

in them, because of the blindness of their hearts, Eph. iv. 18.

Where there is a vail cast before the eyes of knowledge, there is a bar set before the hands of practice. An ignorant person neither knows what he is doing, nor does he know whither he is going: he doth nothing but undo himself by doing: carnal men see no preciousness and loveliness in Christ: Oh! 'What is thy beloved more than another beloved? Cant. v. 9. If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that asketh, thou wouldst have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water.' John iv. 10.

Christ goes undesired in the world, because he goes undiscerned by the world. 'But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned,' 1 Cor. iv. 14. But now believers being enlightened by the Spirit of God, and by the word of God, they see themselves what they were before faith, and what they are by faith, and when they shall be at the end of faith; they see Christ to be all precious in his ordinances, precious in his discoveries, precious in his graces, precious in his gifts, precious in his promises, precious in his members, precious in his ministers, and precious in himself, 1 Pet. ii. 8. Therefore believers cannot but love him, and follow him.

Fifthly, They follow the Lamb, because they love the Lamb. 'Grace be with all them that love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity,' Eph. vi. 25. They love him with a superlative love: 'Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon the earth that I desire besides thee,' Psal. lxxii. 25. The Spouse of Christ looks upon what she is, as not great enough for her remembrance, and what she doth, is not good enough for his acceptance. 'Look not upon me because I am black, because sin hath looked upon me: my mother's children were angry with me, they made me the keeper of the vineyards, but mine own vineyard have I not kept,' Cant. i. 6.

The church is never more fair than when she judgeth herself to be most deformed: never more happy than when she accounts herself most miserable; never more holy, than when she reckons herself most polluted; she is never richer, than when she seeth herself to be poorest of all. The soul that loves much is a soul that works much; the commands of the gospel are not grievous to him, but precious to him. 'Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth! when thou feedest?' Cant. i. 7. A soul that loves Christ hath his eyes upon Christ, and his desire is after Christ, 'The desire of my soul is to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee. With my soul have I desired thee in the night: yea, with my spirit I will seek thee early.'

True believers love Christ more than they love themselves. 'They loved not their lives unto the death,' Rev. xii. 11. Christ is dearer to them than their lives; they slighted, contemned, yea, despised their very lives, when they stood in competition with Christ and his glory, and chose rather to suffer the greatest misery than he should lose the least dram of his honour. The love of Christ hath made the saints and witnesses yield all the parts and members of their bodies, to the cruel and merciless instruments of bloody persecutors: their backs to be whipped, their eyes to be bored, their tongues to be cut out of their mouths, Hebrews xi. 36. Oh! how strongly did these love! The measure of loving Christ, is to love him without measure: 'Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?' Tribulation shall not, persecution shall not, famine and nakedness shall not, peril and sword shall not: 'For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord,' Rom. viii. 35, 38, 39.

Sixthly, They follow the Lamb, because they are married to the Lamb, Jer. iii. 24. 'I am married

unto

unto you, Rev. xxi. 9. I will shew you the bride the Lamb's wife, Cant. ii. 16. My beloved is mine, and I am his. Here I will shew you two things. First, How Christ comes to be ours. Secondly, How we come to be Christ's.

First, Christ is ours by free donation and gift of the Father: 'God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son,' John iii. 16.

Secondly, Christ gave himself freely for us, so that Christ is ours by his own consent: he hath as it were passed over himself unto us, 'Christ loved me and gave himself for me,' saith the apostle, Gal. ii. 20.

Thirdly, Christ hath passed himself over unto his church by marriage, and therefore she is called his queen, his spouse, his bride, and his wife, Psal. xlv. 9. Although we had nothing to bring to him but poverty, shame, sorrow, and misery; yet he took us, and loved us, and married us.

Fourthly, Christ is ours by communicating his own Spirit to us.

Secondly, The saints are Christ's four ways.

First, By the donation of the Father, 'God hath made him both Lord and Christ, Acts ii. 26. And hath put all things under his feet, and given him to be head over all things to the church, Eph. i. 22. And now (saith Christ) behold I and the children whom thou gavest me, thine they were, and thou gavest them me,' John xii. 6. 'God the Father gave us to God the Son, that he might redeem us; and God the Son did give us to God the Father, that he might sanctify us, and keep us from the evil of the world, verse 17.

Secondly, We are Christ's by choice, I have chosen you out of the world, and the saints are said to be chosen in Christ, Eph. i. 4.

And they are called a chosen generation, 1 Pet. ii. And chosen and faithful, Rev. xviii. 14.

Thirdly, The saints are Christ's by purchase; we were in our enemies hands and under their power, and could not free ourselves from the bondage of the law.

sin, Satap, death and hell: therefore saith the apostle, 'We are bought with a price,' 1 Cor. vi. 20.

For in respect of God's justice we are bought by Christ.

Fourthly, We are Christ's by combination and covenant, 'I entered into a covenant with thee, and thou becamest mine,' Ezek. xvi. 8. That is, I did make a solemn covenant of stipulation with thee, that I would take thee to be my people. So that is no wonder believers follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth: they are married to him, he is their head and husband.

Seventhly, They follow the Lamb, because they have the Spirit of the Lamb, 'We have not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, that we may know the things that are of God, and we have the mind of Jesus Christ,' 1 Cor. ii. 11, 12, 16. And we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his; This Spirit that the Lord Jesus gives to believers, is a sealing Spirit, a lively Spirit, an enlightning Spirit, a leading Spirit. It leads from all evil to all good: and all the Lamb's followers are in the Spirit of the Lamb: and therefore they pray in the Spirit, and with the Spirit, and by the Spirit, and for more of the Spirit: they that have this Spirit, need not a book to pray by. Now all true believers have the Spirit of the Lamb: therefore they follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth.

Eighthly, Believers follow the Lamb, because all their privileges come from the Lamb, they are all kings and priests, Rev. i. 6. and v. 10. And sons and heirs, 1 John iii. 1. 'Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, Rom. viii. 17. If children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ.'

Though believers have not a crown in life, yet they are heirs to a crown of life: God puts the greatest honour upon his own people, Prov. xii. 26. All the honour that other men have is not worth the hav-

ing:

ing: that which makes a man great in the eyes of the world, makes a man nothing in the eyes of God. Men are never the better for the greatness, if they are not made better by their greatness. But now believers greatness and honour comes by Christ: the faithful and true witness, the first begotten of the dead, and the Prince of the kings of the earth, 'He hath made us unto our God kings and priests, and we shall reign on the earth,' Rev. v. 10. All the light and life, and hope, and joy, and peace, and beauty, and honour, and riches believers have, they have it all by Christ and from Christ: he gave them rich grace and rich glory, and all things richly to enjoy, 1 Tim. vi. 17.

Take a man that is out of Christ, and he hath none of all this, Eph. ii. 12. 'That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the common-wealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenant of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world; (yea,) he is wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked,' Rev. iii. 17.

O! this is the condition of every graceless, faithless, and Christless person. But now a believer tho' he be never so poor in the world's eye, he is rich in God's eye. For all things are his, and he shall inherit all things, 1 Cor. iii. 22. Rev. xxi. 7. He that overcometh shall inherit all things. But how comes it to pass, that a believer hath so much, and all others so little? He hath it all from Christ, 'Of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace,' John i. 16. Therefore believers do glory in Christ, because they have all their glory by and from Christ, 1 Cor. i. 31. He hath enough to glory in, that hath Christ to glory in. Now believers cannot but cleave to him, and follow him, because all their good things come by him.

Ninthly, They follow the Lamb, because their names are written in the Lamb's book, Rev. xiii. 8.

And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life, of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, and

there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, nor maketh a lie; but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life,' Rev. xxi. 27. All the rest of all the worshippers of the beast, and all unbelievers shall be cast into the lake of fire which burns and flames for ever, Rev. xix. 20. There be a great many that follow the beast, worship the beast, receive the mark of the beast, and admire the beast, Chap. xiii. 3. But what are they, are they many that have their names written in the Lamb's book of life? No, not. For this see Rev. xvii. 8. 'The beast which thou sawest, was and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and shall go into perdition; and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names are not written in the book of life.' So that you see what that cursed crew are that follow Babylon, they are such whose names are not written in the book of life. But they that have their Father's name written in their foreheads, and their names written in the Lamb's book, they follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth: And they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful, Rev. xvii. 14.

Tenthly and lastly, Precious ones follow the Lamb, because they shall be for ever with the Lamb. 'They which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words,' 1 Thes. iv. 17, 18. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more; neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat: for the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes,' Rev. vii. 15, 16, 17. How troublesome soever a saint's beginning is, his end is joyful. When believers change earth for heaven, they do not lose

their happiness, but complete their happiness, John xvii. 24. 'Father, I will, that they also whom thou gavest me, be with me, where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me: for thou lovest me before the foundation of the world.' Not only with me for ever, but my saints with my angels, and with my Father, and with all that are with me.

To be with God and Christ for ever, implieth these seven things. First, The presence of God. (2.) The happy union with God. (3.) The blessed vision of God. (4.) The glorious communion with God. (5.) The fruition of God. (6.) The rest that the saints shall have in God. (7.) The enjoyments of themselves in God.

Oh! how unspeakable is the glory of heaven? O how infinitely glorious is the Lamb! Now true believers follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth, because they shall be for ever with the Lamb, in fulness of glory, and endless felicity, Rom. viii. 17. Thus have I shewed you why believers follow the Lamb. Now I shall shew you the excellency of following the Lamb.

The first excellency is, they that follow the Lamb, have the presence of the Lamb with them. The hundred forty and four thousand that stood upon mount Sion, had the Lamb with them, Psal. xlv. 5. 'God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved: God shall help her and that right early. The Lord of hosts is with us, the God of Jacob is our refuge,' ver. 7. God is in the midst of his church, not only to behold her, but to uphold her; tho' the church's enemies may be waves to toss her, yet they shall never be rocks to split her, because God is in the midst of her, this is that which comforted and strengthened David: 'Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me, Psal. xxiii. 4. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee, and thro' the rivers they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burnt, neither shall the flames kindle upon thee,' Isa. xliii. 2. Oh! they that follow the

Lamb, shall stand for the Lamb, have the presence of the Lamb, his glorious presence, his gracious presence, his comforting presence, his protecting presence, his quickening and sanctifying presence.

The second excellency is, That they that follow the Lamb, shall know the mind of the Lamb, 'It is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given. And blessed are your eyes for they see, and your ears for they hear, Matth. xiii. 11, 16. Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his Lord doth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father, I have made known unto you,' John xvii. 9, 7, 8. Jesus Christ that lies in the bosom of his Father, he unbosoms and unbosoms the heart of the Father for believers; they know his secrets, his mind, his counsel, and his will, and none knoweth it but them: I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes,' Matth. xi. 25. But they that walk with God, know much of the mind of God, and the mysteries of the gospel.

The third excellency of following the Lamb, is, they that follow the Lamb, may come boldly to the Lamb: 'Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need,' Heb. iv. 16. A soul that hath an interest in Christ may come boldly to Christ, and speak boldly to him, and to his Father for any mercy he needeth; he may go to the throne of grace for grace, and open his heart to God as one friend to another. Oh! what liberty have believers? Oh! what a privilege have they, that they may go to God with a holy boldness! the wicked proud ones of the earth are so high that the poor saints cannot come boldly and freely to them; but they may come boldly and freely to the Lord their God, Matth. xi. 28. 'Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.'

The

The fourth excellency is, That they that follow the Lamb, shall have all their wants supplied by the Lamb, Ppilip iv. 19. But my God shall supply all your needs, according to his riches in glory by Jesus Christ. They that follow the Lamb shall want no good thing. 'Oh fear the Lord ye his saints: for there is no want to them that fear him. The young lions do lack and suffer hunger, but they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing, Psal xxxv. 9. 10. The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want, Psal. xxiii. 1. Delight thyself in the Lord, and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart;' thou shalt have whatsoever thou desirest to have. He that hath the chiefest good shall want no good. 'Whosoever shall drink of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst: and he that cometh to me shall never hunger,' John vi. 25. Oh! who would not follow and believe in the Lamb? O happy are all that love the Lamb?

The fifth excellency is, They that follow the Lamb, shall share with the Lamb.

First, In his divine nature, 'Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust,' 2 Pet. i. 4. That is, of those divine qualities whereby we are made like unto God, in wisdom and righteousness, and true holiness, John iv. 24.

Secondly, In this conquest, the poor saints share with Christ in all his noble and honourable conquests. (1 Cor. xv. 55.) Over the world, death, and hell, and over sufferings: 'In all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us, Rom. viii. 37.'

Thirdly, They share with Christ in his graces. 'Of his fulness we have all received, and grace for grace.' John i. 16. As a child receives member for member, as the paper from the press receives letter for letter, as the wax from the seal receives print for print, or as the glass from the image receives face for face, so do believers receive from Christ, grace for grace, that

is, for every grace that is in the Lamb, there is the same grace in us, in some measure.

Fourthly, Believers share with Christ in his glorious titles, he is called a Son, so are they; a King, so are they; a Priest, so are they; an Heir, so are they; Rom. vii. 17. Rev. v. 10. and i. 5, 6.

Fifthly, They share with Christ in his glory. 'I go to prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there you may be also, John xiv. 3. And the glory which thou gavest me, I have given them; that they may be one even as we are one. John xvii. 22. My sheep hear my voice, and they follow me, and I give unto them eternal life,' John x. 27, 28.

The saints shall have the same glory which Christ himself hath: the saints in heaven are not only glorified with Christ (which is a great exaltation) but they do enjoy the very same glory which Christ himself doth, the same for kind, though not in degree. The head and members are glorified together with the same kind of glory. God hath not one heaven for his Son and another for his saints; but one and the same for both. Believers shall be as truly glorious as Christ is eternally, glorious as he is. 'Our vile bodies shall be fashioned like unto his glorious body; and we shall be glorified together with him, and appear with him in glory,' Rom. viii. Col. iii. Oh! here is the excellency of following the Lamb, they that follow him, shall share with him.

The sixth excellency of following the Lamb, is, They that follow the Lamb, shall be protected by the Lamb. 'He suffered no man to do them wrong; yea, he reprov'd kings for their sakes, saying, Touch not mine anointed and do my prophets no harm, Psalm cv. 14, 15. Which are his saints. Who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good, and if ye suffer for righteousness sake, happy are ye, and be not afraid of this terror, neither be troubled, 1 Pet. iii. 13, 14. Fear thou not for I am with thee, be not dismayed, for I am thy God: yea, I will strengthen thee

thee, yea, I will help thee, yea, I will uphold thee with the right-hand of my righteousness, Isa. xli. 10. Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet I will not forget thee, Isa. xlix. 15. Who can harm a man if God be with him and for him? He that hath the love of God needs not care for the anger of men. A true believer hath the love of God, the love of Christ, the love of good angels, the love of good men, and the love of all whose love is worth the having. God protects men in his way, but not out of his way: when men appear for God, God appears for men: he is good to them in affliction, and he doth them good by affliction.

The seventh excellency is, They that follow the Lamb, shall not feel the wrath of the Lamb, Rev. ii. 11. 'He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death. 1 Thes. i. 20 And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus which delivered us from the wrath to come. There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit,' Rom. viii. 1. O how sad is the condition of those who live and die without Christ! they are sent to hell, Psal. ix. 17. 'The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God. Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power,' 2 Thes. i. 9. They shall feel and suffer the wrath of the Lamb, (because they despised the truth of the Lamb :) 'Because I have called, and ye have refused, I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; but ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof: I also will laugh at your calamity, I will mock when your fear cometh, when your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you. Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me,' Prov. i. 24, to

the 29. Do you hear this, sinners, if you die in your sins! be sure hell will shew you no mercy. Now the believer shall feel and suffer none of this, he is in a happy state and condition.

The eighth excellency is, They that follow the Lamb, shall reign with the Lamb, and this is another excellency of following the Lamb, true believers do reign now over the creatures, over the pomp and pride of the world, over all spirits, over sin, over the consciences of wicked men, and over sufferings: but besides all this they shall reign with Christ, and over those that now reign over them. Rev. v. 10. And he shall reign on the earth, Chap. xx. 4. And they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. And as the wicked tread down the saints under their feet now, so shall the saints then tread down the wicked under their feet, Mal. iv. 3. The Lord hath promised that the meek shall inherit the earth, do not the scriptures say that in the last days the mountain of the Lord's house shall be lifted up above the hills, and shall be established in the tops of the mountains? Isa. ii. 2. And that the kingdoms of this world must become the kingdoms of our Lord Jesus Christ? Rev. xi. 15. And he that loves to see the face of his church beautiful, will ere long wipe away these bloody tears. It is not long before you will triumph and say, Cant. ii. 11, 12. 'Lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone: the flowers appear on the earth, the time of the singing of birds is come.'

The ninth excellency is, They that follow the Lamb, shall sit upon the throne with the Lamb, Rev. iii. 21. 'To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father on his throne, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel,' Matth. xix. 28. Oh! what an honour is this, what a glory is this, to sit upon the throne with Christ? Is it not honour and glory enough for us to be in heaven with God, and Christ, and angels, but we must sit upon a throne there? O what an honour

nour is this? and yet this honour shall all the Lamb's followers have.

The tenth excellency of following the Lamb, is, They that follow the Lamb shall judge the world with the Lamb. If you consult the sacred records, you will find that both God and Christ, and the saints are said to judge the world. The ordination is God's, the execution is Christ's, the approbation is the saints. When the apostle would stop the sinful suits among the Corinthian brethren, that did not want men of eminency to put a period to controversies, saith, 'Do you not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? 1 Cor. vi. 4. Enoch the seventh from Adam prophesied, saying, Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, Jude 14, 15 verses. When the Son of man shall sit on the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel,' Matth. xix. 28. Now the world judges the saints, but then the saints shall judge the world. Now they judge and condemn Christ and his members, but then they shall be judged and condemned by Christ and his members. For as the world cannot endure God himself, so neither can they endure God in the saints, and the more God dwells in the saints, the more the world afflicts the saints; but they that follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth, shall then sit upon those that now sit upon them. Thus I have shewed you the excellencies of following the Lamb.

Fourthly, The misery of those that follow not the Lamb but the beast: O their misery is great in this life; but it shall be greater in the other.

The first misery of them that follow the beast, is, they that follow him, shall share with him in all his plagues. 'And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast, and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand; the same shall drink of the wine of the

the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation, and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the Lamb,' Rev. xiv. 9, 10. O the plagues, the terrible plagues that shall fall upon the beast: Death and mourning, and famine and fire, Chap. xviii. 8. The judgment shall come upon all parties, and upon all degrees and conditions of men that join with the beast. All those that do partake of his sins, shall share of his plagues.

There is 1st, A vial poured out upon the earth; that is upon the common people, Chap. xix. verse 1. 2dly, Another vial upon the seat, that is the jurisdiction of Rome, ver. 3. 3dly, Another vial upon the rivers, that is their ministers, verse 4. 4thly, Another vial is poured out upon the sun, that is princes and magistrates, verse 8. 5thly, Another vial upon the sea, that is Rome itself, the throne of the beast, verse 10. So that all that worship the beast, and receive his mark, and belong to him, whether they be high or low, rich or poor, if they do not come off from him, they shall share with him in all his plagues: 'Come out of her my people, that you be not partaker of her sins, and that you receive not of her plagues,' Rev. xviii. 4.

The second misery of them that follow the beast is, they shall cry to the rocks, and to the mountains of the earth. 'And the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bond man, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens, and in the rocks of the mountains, and said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth upon the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; For the great day of his wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand?' Rev. vi. 15, 16, 17.

The wicked though here clothed in silk and velvet, shall wish for the mountains to cover them, which would be but a poor shelter; for the mountains melt at the presence of the Lord, and the rocks rent asunder, when

when he is angry. They that made others flee away from them as innocent lambs from devouring wolves, shall be afraid of the wrath of the Lamb that sitteth on the throne. Oh! how will those great men dare to appear before his tribunal, that have stained the sword of authority with the blood of innocency, by turning his back against the vicious, and whetting his edge against the righteous: many an unjust judge that may be now, sits confidently upon the bench, shall then stand trembling at the bar. O how will they be able to lift up their heads before Christ? who have lifted up their heads against Christ! * The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord and against his Christ, Acts iv. 26. Rev. xvii. 14. Instead of helping the Lord against the mighty, they help the mighty against the Lord, Psal. xxii. Oh! how many great men are there, that make no other use of their greatness, but to be great in wickedness, great swearers, great drunkards, great sabbath-breakers, great persecutors, great adulterers, great atheists, who instead of denying or forsaking the devil and all his works, follow the devil and all his works, who sin with content, and are content with their sins: The princes are rebellious, and companions of thieves, Isa. i. 23. But the great God, against whom the sin is greater than the greatest, * Before whom all nations of the world are but as the drop of a bucket, and as the small dust of the balance, Isa. xl. 15. Who will not fear thee, O King of nations? for as much as there is none like unto thee; O Lord thou art great, and thy name is great, and thy power is great, Jer. x. 6, 7. He toucheth the mountains and they smoke. * Before whom the devils fear and tremble. Therefore, wo, wo, be to them that forsake him, and follow the beast, they shall cry and call for help, but there will be none to help them.

The third misery of those that follow the beast, is, They shall be cast into a lake of fire with the beast, * And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which

which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image, these both were cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone, Rev. xix. 20. The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the gospel of our Lord, Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction, from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power, 2 Thes. i. 6, 8, 9. O what a dreadful thing is it to ly under the wrath of God, to ly in burning flames, and for ever to be banished from the presence of God, and his holy angels; This will be the portion of the beast's followers. O will they not then wish they had never been born, and that they might be turned into stocks and stones? But alas their wishes will do them no good. Christ will say to them, 'Depart ye cursed into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels,' Matth. xxv. 41. O ye rulers and great ones of the earth! it will be no dishonour to your honours, to lay your honour at his feet, in whose presence the angels veil their faces, and before whose throne the elders cast their crowns, Isa. vi. 2. Rev. iv. 10. O! is it not better with patience to suffer with Zion and the church's party a while, rather than join with the Romish party, and be ruined with them in the end? Rev. xiv. 12. Here is the patience of the saints. Ye shall suffer a while, and be trodden down by them, and you must stay for a full accomplishment of his promise for your deliverance, but I will surely come, and I will recompense all your patience; and therefore be not discouraged, nor faint in your minds; let not your hearts turn back into Egypt, and hanker after Rome, those remnants of Baal which God will surely destroy.

Fifthly, I shall shew you now, how the Lamb's followers may be known by the beast's followers.

First, You may know them by their number, they are in number the fewest; 'Many are called, but few

are

are chosen, Matth. xx. 16. Though all Israel be as the sand of the sea, yet but a remnant shall be saved.' Rom. ix. 27. And Christ calls his flock a little flock, Luke xii. 32. And truly, beloved, they are but a few that follow the Lamb and believe in him. The Heathen follow the devil, the Turks follow Mahomer, the Jews follow Moses, the Papists the Pope, and loose Protestants, and carnal professors they follow the world, the flesh, and the devil, and false teachers, false doctrine, and false worship; and all the world wonders at the beast, Rey. xiii. 3. The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitude and nations, and tongues. Chap. xvii. 15. Believers, tho' their number is the sweetest, yet their number is the smallest. In heaven are the best, but in hell are the most. O dear Christians, there are but few upright Christians; there are many thorns, but few lilies, many almost, but few altogether Christians.

Secondly, By their characters you may know them: you have nine lovely characters of them in this xiv. chapter. First, They stand with the Lamb upon mount Zion. Secondly, They have their Father's name written in their foreheads. Thirdly, They sing a new song which none can learn but only the hundred forty and four thousand. Fourthly, They are such as are redeemed from the earth. Fifthly, They are virgin saints, not defiled with women. Sixthly, They follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. Seventhly, They are redeemed from among men. Eighthly, They bring their first fruits unto God, and to the Lamb. Ninthly, And in their mouth was found no guile; for they are without fault before the throne of God. Oh! how holy, how heavenly, how gracious, how glorious, how lovely and spiritual are these? they live in the Lord, on the Lord, to the Lord, and with the Lord. 'They are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people,' 1 Pet. ii. 9.

Thirdly, By their spirit, They have another spirit, Num. iv. 24. All the Lamb's followers are in the Spirit of the Lamb, Rom. viii. 9, 16. And by the Spirit they

they are led and taught: a spirit of holiness, a spirit of meekness, a spirit of love, a free spirit, and a true humble and faithful spirit, to and for the Lord. Now as the Lamb's followers are in the Spirit of the Lamb, so the beast's followers are in the spirit of the beast, which is no other than the spirit of the devil. Eph. ii. 2. According to the prince of the power of the air, (the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience.) A spirit of lording and domineering, a spirit of cunning and craftiness, a spirit of deceit, a spirit of superstition, a spirit of persecution and cruelty; and in this spirit are all the followers of the beast, now by this you may know the Lamb's followers, from the beast's followers.

Fourthly, by their name, They have another name, a new name, Rev. iii. 12. God gives his people honourable titles, tho' the beast gives them reproachful titles, God calls them the dearly beloved of his Soul, Jer. xii. 7. And the apple of his eye, Zech. ii. 8. And his jewel, Mat. iii. 17. His glory, his portion, his bride, his friends, and children. But the beast calls them seditious, hereticks, deceivers, and deluders, and blasphemers, and fools, and mad men, as if they were not worthy to have a being amongst men: but though they are ravens in the world's eye, yet they are doves in God's eye: yea, they are such worthies of whom the world is not worthy, Heb. xi. 38. Now (dear Christians) by this you may know the Lamb's followers from others, by the nicknames the world giveth them, and by the glorious name that God giveth them.

Fifthly, By their graces they may be known: Such as are the Lamb's followers are full of faith, full of love, full of grace and goodness; they are very fruitful, and bring forth much fruit, John xv. 15. They are called heaven, because of their heavenliness, Rom. viii. 1. And holy because of their holiness, spiritual, because of their spiritualness: and faithful, because of their faithfulness. There is much of God to be seen in them, and in their words, works, duties, and conver-

conversations, Philip. iii. 20. For our conversation is in heaven. They seek heavenly things, and walk by an heavenly rule, they eye spiritual objects, and are led by a heavenly spirit: they submit to a heavenly government, and imitate heavenly ones. There is much of heaven in them, and much of them in heaven. 'When I awake I am still with thee,' saith David.

But now the beast's followers they are full too: but it is with blood and swearing, cursing, stealing, lying, blaspheming, rebellion, and all manner of abominations and filthiness, Hosea iv. 2. Rom. iii. Rev. iii. 3. Now beloved, by this you may know Christ's precious ones from the beast's filthy ones.

Sixthly, The Lamb's followers may be known from the beast's, by their keeping the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus Christ. Here is the patience of the saints. Here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus. So Rev. xii. 17. 'The dragon was wroth with the woman, and made war with the remnant of her seed which keep the commandments of God, having the testimony of Jesus Christ.' True believers cleave to the Lord, and follow him fully; 'But my servant Caleb hath followed me fully,' Numb. xiv. 24. And Enoch walked with God, Gen. v. 24. And Noah walked with God, Gen. vi. 9. Let us walk in the spirit. Rom. v. 25. And they follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth, they hear his voice, they profess his worship, and obey his doctrine, they abhor Antichrist, they follow not the beast, nor receive his mark, but keep the beautiful garments of gospel innocency, and will not touch beastly Babylon.

Seventhly, By their company, the Lamb's followers keep company together. 'Being let go, they went to their own company.' Acts iv. 23. So they are said to stand upon the sea of glass together. 'And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire, and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps

harps. of God,' Rev. xv. 2. So they that are with the Lamb upon mount Zion, are together, keep together, and follow the Lamb together. Christ's faithful witnesses do not hear with Antichrist's heavens, or worship with them which worship the beast, for they are come out of Babylon, Chap. xviii. 4. 'Come out of her my people that ye be not partakers of her sins, that ye receive not of her plagues. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate; and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you faith the Lord,' 2 Cor. vi. 17. The children of God will not keep company with the children of wrath, for they cannot agree: 'For what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? and what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? and what agreement hath the temple of God with idols?' 2 Cor. vi. 14, 15, 16. Therefore believers, keep together, walk together, and worship God together. And they that believed, were of one heart and of one soul, and continued in the apostles doctrine and fellowship, Acts iv. 34. and ii. 42. By this the Lamb's followers are known, to wit, by their company.

Eightly, by their language they are known, True believers speak the language of Canaan, their language is scripture language, you may know them by their speech, as Peter was known by his speech, 'Surely thou art one of them, for thy speech bewrayeth thee,' Matth. xxvi. 72. Their words are holy and heavenly, they speak of God, and to God, and for God, and he heareth them, Mal. iii. 16. But the beast's followers speak wickedly, proudly, daringly, and blasphemously, Chap. xiii. 4. 6. And he opened his mouth, blaspheming God, his Son, his name, his saints, and they that dwell in heaven, verse 6. Men are known who, and what they are, and to whom they do belong, by their language, if they are of God, and in God, they cannot but speak much of God.

Ninthly, The Lamb's followers are known by this, they

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they are more afflicted with the church's heaviness, than they are affected with their own happiness. 'The king said why is thy countenance sad, this is nothing else but sorrow of heart, seeing thou art not sick? Why should not my countenance be sad, when the city, the place of my fathers sepulchres lieth waste, and the gates thereof are burnt with fire?' Neh. ii. 2, 3. How can Zion's sons be rejoicing, when their mother is mourning? Tho' they were the Jews desolation, yet they were Jeremiah's lamentation, how can such rejoice in her standing, that do not mourn for her falling? when the church's adversaries make long furrows on her back, we should cast in the seed of tears. 'Remember them that are in bonds, as being bound with them; and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves likewise in the body,' Heb. xiii. 3. Sympathizing with others, makes an estate that is joyful more happy, and an estate that is adverse, less doleful and heavy. 'The righteous perish, and no man layeth it to heart,' Isa. lvii. 1. We may draw up that charge against many now, Amos vi. 4. 'They ly upon beds of ivory, and stretch themselves upon couches, and eat the lambs out of the flock, and the calves out of the midst of the stall. verse 6. That drink wine in bowls, and anoint themselves with the chief ointment: but they are not grieved for the afflictions of Joseph.' Oh! that there were not too many such now a days, that eat the fat and drink the sweet, and are not troubled for Zion's troubles; instead of sympathizing with them in their misery, they are censuring them for their misery: but the true servants of God are tender and broken hearted they weep and mourn and wring their hands for Zion's sins, for Zion's breaches, for Zion's calamities, for Zion's deliverance. And thus they do, and will do, till they see Zion on mount Zion to be with the Lamb.

Tenthly, The Lamb's followers are known by their love to Christ, and sufferings for Christ, they choose the worst of sorrows, because they will commit the least of sins. 'For thy sake we are killed all the day long, and

and counted as sheep for the slaughter, Psalm xliv. Rom. viii. 36. And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake, Matth. x. 22. Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake, Matth. v. 11. Love can walk on the water without drowning, and ly in the fire, without burning. How shall we land at the haven of rest, if we are not tossed upon the sea of trouble? A believer should live above the love of life, and the fear of death. Though we cannot live without afflictions, yet let us live above afflictions. None are so welcome to that heavenly Canaan, as those that swim to it through the red sea of their own blood; in suffering, the offence is done to us, in sinning, the offence is done to God, in suffering, we lose the favour of men: in sinning, we lose the favour of God: therefore Daniel chose the den of the lions, rather than he would forsake the cause of the Lamb, Dan. vi. 6. And the three children chose rather to suffer sadly, than to sin foully, Dan. iii. And Moses chose rather to suffer afflictions with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, Heb. xi. 25. It is better to be a martyr than a monarch. It is better to be a prisoner for Jesus Christ, than to be a prince without Christ, or against Christ.

O how precious, how glorious, how lovely and how sweet is Jesus Christ to believers! O they love him intirely, uprightly; they love his glorious Person, and the beauty of his holiness, and his name, his honour, his cause, and his members; they will suffer for him, and die for him, because he suffered and died for them, Rev. xii. 11. And they loved not their lives unto the death. Now by this all men may know the Lamb's followers from the beast's followers, viz. By their sorrows and sufferings for Christ, for truth, for righteousness, and for conscience sake, Heb. xii. 34. And they took joyfully the spoiling of their goods, Heb. xi. 35.

Eleventhly, The Lamb's followers are known by

this, they seek the publick good of others, above the private good of themselves. 'I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart; for I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh, Rom. ix. 2, 3. And now, O Father, glorify thy Son, that thy Son may glorify thee.' John xvii. 1. He prayed for glory more for the Father's sake that bestowed it, than for his own sake that received it. A true Christian doth not desire grace only for this end, that God may glorify him, but he desires grace for this end, that he may glorify God. 'For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich,' 2 Cor. viii. 9. Oh! that the Lord Jesus should not only in pity save us, but in love die for us. And David after he had served his generation by the will of God fell asleep, Acts xiii. 36. His generation did not serve him, but he served his generation: not the generation that was before him, for they were dead before he was living: not the generation that was behind him, for they were living after he was dead, but his own generation: and not by his own will, but by the will of God. Old Eli mourned more for the loss of his religion than for the loss of his relations, 1 Sam. iv. 18. So Moses, Exod. xxxiv. 10. 'Now therefore let me alone that my wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them: and I will make of thee a great nation.' He was no self seeker but a life preserver. Grace doth not only make a man carry it like a man to God, but to carry it like a god to man, reason makes a man, but grace makes a man a Christian. Every gracious spirit is public, but every public spirit is not gracious.

As we are not born by ourselves, so we are not born for ourselves. But the beast's followers and Babylon's merchants are for themselves, and seek themselves: 'Yea, they are greedy dogs which can never have enough, and they are shepherds that cannot understand:

derstand: they all look to their own way, every one for his gain from his quarter, Isa. lvi. 11. They teach things they ought not for filthy lucre's sake, Tit. i. 11. Wo unto you Scribes and Pharisees; for ye devour widows houses, and for a pretence make long prayers, therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation.' Matth. xxiv. 14. These make no gain to stoop to godliness, but godliness to stoop to gain.

Twelfthly and lastly, The Lamb's followers may be known from the beast's followers by this, they are more for power than form, for heart than art, for matter than method, for substance than show; 'Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof, from such turn aside,' 2 Tim. iii. 5. As they who have the power of godliness cannot deny the form, so they who have the form of godliness should not deny the power. Alas! what is hearing without doing, and praying without practising, and teaching without reforming? God loves to see the plants of righteousness, he beareth greater respect to our hearts, than he doth to our works. 'I beseech you therefore, brethren by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God,' Rom. xii. 1.

The formalist he is all for outward actions, and for nothing of inward sincerity: he is for a body without a soul, and shew without a substance: but it is not a show of outward piety, that will excuse inward hypocrisy. 'For he is not a Jew that is one outwardly, neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh. But he is a Jew which is one inwardly, and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter, whose praise is not of men but of God, Rom. ii. 28, 29. I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are of the synagogue of Satan,' Rev. ii. 6. They are better in their outsides than they are in their insides, but believers are better in their insides than they are in their outsides. The king's daughter is all glorious within, her clothing is wrought of gold, Psalm

xlv. 13. The one bows but his knee at the name of Jesus, the other bows his heart to the truth of Jesus; the one only signs with the cross, the other carries the cross: O! what would not hypocritical men do for heaven, if they might save heaven for their so doing? But they that sail in this rotten bottom will surely sink in the ocean. 'Who hath required this at your hands, to tread my courts? To what purpose is your sacrifices unto me, saith the Lord? I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts, and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, nor of lambs nor of he-goats.' It was not the clay and spittle that cured the blind man, but Christ anointing his eyes. It was not the troubling of the waters in the pool of Bethesda, that made them whole, but the coming down of the angel. Alas! the dish without the meat will not feed us. Men may spread the net of duty, but it is God must take the draught of mercy. Now, by this, beloved, you may know the Lamb's followers from the beast's followers.

And thus I have briefly and clearly shewed you these five things.

First, What following the Lamb is.

Secondly, Why glorious souls follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth.

Thirdly, The excellency in following the Lamb.

Fourthly, The misery of following the beast.

Fifthly, How the Lamb's followers may be known from the beast's followers.

I shall make some use of this.

First, For examination and self trial: Oh friends! for the Lord's sake, and for your souls sake, examine yourselves, try yourselves by this, that you may know whose you are, and to whom you do belong. 'Know ye not, to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey, whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?' Rom. vi. 16.

Oh! Whom do ye follow? If men, verily you have

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your reward. If sin, you shall have your sins wages, which is eternal death; wo and misery in this life and hell and destruction in the other life; but if God then you shall have eternal life. Therefore be not deceived, mistake not yourselves, God is not mocked; but whatsoever a man sows, that shall he reap. Oh! beloved, examine yourselves, and try yourselves, what is your mind? what it is you seek? what is you do? Do you follow the Lamb in his commandments, in his teaching, in his appointments, and in his examples, and through suffering and reproaches have you forsaken all and followed him? Matth. xii. 29. Have you taken up his cross and denied yourselves? Matth. xvi. 24. Have you learned of him to be meek and lowly? Matth. xi. 29. Have you visited and clothed his members? Matth. xxv. 35. Have you kissed the Son, and made your peace with him? O beloved, are you new creatures? are you in Christ? Are you in the faith? Know you not if Christ be in you ye are reprobates? 2 Cor. xiii. 5.

The second Use is Exhortation.

O beloved, let me beseech you, for your precious and immortal souls sake, to come out of Babylon, from the beast's image, and from his worship, and from his mark, that you may not be defiled. O! come away to Jesus Christ: 'Arise my love, and come away' Cant. ii. 10. Come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest,' Matth. xi. 28. Oh sinners! he calls you to come to him, will you not go? We must forsake sin, and embrace virtue; put off the old man, and put on the new man; we must have repentance and mortification, dying unto sin, and a living unto righteousness; from the love of earthly things, to the desire of heavenly things. Our bodies and our souls must come away unto Christ; our souls because they are the spouse of Christ: our bodies, because they are the temples of the holy Ghost; we must come away from the entertainments of the flesh, and the allurements of the world, and suggestions of the devil, and from the whore

Babylon

Babylon, and from all the inventions and traditions of men, Rev. xviii. 4. That ye may walk with God, before God, after God, and in the name of God, and in the Spirit of God; and that ye may live in Christ, as Christ lives in the Father. O what more happy than to live for ever; and so live for ever, as Christ himself liveth! surely that is a blessed and glorious life. This is a believer's life.

Secondly, Labour more and more to be like those that follow the Lamb fully, they are very holy and pure, they are called virgins.

First, For their chastity: That I may present you as chaste virgins unto Christ, 2 Cor. xi. 2. These love Christ with a chaste, but not with an adulterous love.

Secondly, For their purity: They are virgin saints, they are not defiled with the whore of Bayblon, but have kept themselves from her idolatry and superstition, and from her sin and wickedness; 'And in their mouth was found no guile.'

Believers are stiled and titled heaven: Christ's members are glorious members: They are called heaven for two reasons.

First, Because there is much of heaven in them.

Secondly, Because there is much of them in heaven.

First, There is much of heaven in believers, much of God, much of Christ, and much of the Spirit: 'Of his fulness have we all received, and grace for grace,'

John i. 16. The glory of God, the knowledge of God, the presence of God, the love of God, the holiness of God, the joys of God, these are the things

that make heaven to be heaven. Now there is much of these in believers, therefore they are called heaven.

We are taken unto communion with angels: and our communion with angels, in great measure doth con-

stitute in bearing a part with them in praising God; it is the action of heaven, believers are holy ones, and they have glorious titles.

First, The Lord's portion, Deut. xxxii. 9.

Secondly, His pleasant portion, Jer. xii. 10.

- Thirdly His inheritance, Isa. xix. 25.
 Fourthly, The dearly beloved of his soul, Jer. xiii. 23.
 Fifthly, God's treasure, and peculiar treasure, Exod. xix. 5.
 Sixthly, His glory, Isa. xlv. 13.
 Seventhly, The house of God's glory, Isa. lx. 8.
 Eighthly, A crown of glory, Isa. lxiii. 3.
 Ninthly, A royal diadem, in the same place.
 Tenthly, The glory of God, Jer. iii. 17.
 Eleventhly, Golden candlesticks, Rev. i. 12.
 Twelfthly, Kings, Rev. v. 18. And in my tent in Heaven.

There is as much difference between the church and God and other men, as there is betwixt gold and dross, betwixt diamonds and bubbles, in the Lord's esteem they are to God above all people. The righteous are more excellent than his neighbour, Prov. xii. 2. Oh, how precious, how happy, how blessed, and glorious are believers! They are called heaven.

Secondly, Believers are called heaven, because there is much of them in heaven.

- 1st, Their thoughts are in heaven, Psal. cxxxix.
 2dly, Their desires are in heaven, Psal. lxxxi.
 3dly, Their affections are in heaven, Col. iii. 2.
 4thly Their hopes are in heaven, Titus ii. 13.
 5thly, Their conversations are in heaven, Phil. iii. 20.

6thly, Their hearts are in heaven, Matth. vi.
 7thly, Their alms are in heaven, Luke x. 20.
 Oh! There is much of believers in heaven, their souls are in heaven, when their bodies are walking upon the earth, they live in heaven whilst they are upon the earth, Eph. ii. 6. And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together, in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. The saints are set in heavenly places, heavenly dignities, heavenly privileges, heavenly prerogatives. The saints of the high God are in high places. The true church is that spouse that is fair and beautiful, Cant. ii. 14. Oh! the church of Christ is lovely and glorious!

First, Glorious in her head. (2.) Glorious in her eyes. (3.) Glorious in her gifts and graces. (4.) Glorious in her offices. (5.) Glorious in her privileges. (6.) Glorious in her members.

O the church of Christ is a holy church and a glorious church, 'That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish, Eph. v. 27. They are not defiled with women, they are virgins, and in their mouth was found no guile. Now he that hath an ear to hear let him hear.'

I shall exhort you that are members of this heavenly church.

First, To seek heavenly things before and above all things else; let your hearts be filled with knowledge, and heavenly riches.

Secondly, Delight in heavenly things: let it be your heaven upon earth, to serve the God of heaven.

Thirdly, Act by heavenly principles.

Fourthly, Have a holy dependance upon God, for direction, for protection, for assistance, for a blessing.

Fifthly, Eye heavenly objects, God, Christ, and the Spirit.

Sixthly, Imitate heavenly ones: follow them that follow Christ.

Seventhly, Walk by a heavenly rule; walk according to the law of heaven.

Eighthly and lastly, Live much in heaven.

Your Father is in heaven, your Head is in heaven, your Husband is in heaven, your King is in heaven, your Treasure is in heaven, your Crown is in heaven, your Wages are in heaven. And where should you be but in heaven? 'Knowing in yourselves that you have in heaven a better and an enduring substance, Heb. x. 34. For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens,' 2 Cor. v. 1.

Oh! These are blessed and holy ones: 'And they

that were with him, are called and chosen, and faithful,' Rev. xvii. 14. Oh, labour to be like those in purity, and piety, in holiness and humbleness, in meekness and patience, in faithfulness and uprightness, in spiritualness, and in all godliness.

Thirdly, Follow the Lamb out of Babylon, 'And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? Rev. x. 10. And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle and reap: for the time is come for thee to reap, for the harvest of the earth is ripe. And he that sat on the cloud, thrust in his sickle to the earth, and the earth was reaped. And another angel came out of the temple, which was in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle,' Rev. xv. 15, 16, 17. The whore of Babylon shall be destroyed with a double destruction. Her walls shall fall down, her wall of power, her wall of policy, her wall of superstition, her wall of maintenance, And that for these reasons.

First, Because she hath a corrupt religion, and that both in doctrine, and worship, 'Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she hath made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication,' Rev. xiv. 8, and xviii. 3.

Secondly, Because she hath poisoned the kings of the earth. The whore of Babylon hath been the great corrupter of kings. 'And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs, come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet: for they are spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth, and of the whole world: to gather them to the battle of the great day of God Almighty,' Rev. xvi. 13, 14. and xvii. 2.

Thirdly, For her cruelty. 'In her was found the blood of the prophets, and all saints that were slain upon the earth, Chap. xviii. 24. And I saw the woman drunk with the blood of the saints, and with the blood

blood of the martyrs of Jesus; and when I saw her I wondred with great admiration,' Chap. xvi. 6.

Fourthly, Because her ruin and destruction is published and proclaimed over the world; 'And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils,' Chap. xviii. 2 and xiv. 8.

Fifthly, This is the great design that Christ hath in the latter days of the world, to destroy Antichrist, 'The Lamb shall overcome them, for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings, Chap. xvii. 14. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns, and he was clothed with a vesture dipt in blood, and his name is called the Word of God. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations,' Chap. xix. 12, 13, 15.

Sixthly, Because he hath greatly insulted and triumphed over the Lord's people in their miseries and calamities. 'And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and send gifts one to another,' Rev. xi. 10.

Seventhly, Because of all the church's enemies that ever were, this is the cruelest enemy. The fourth beast is worse than any of the former beasts. 'And behold a fourth beast dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly, and it had great iron teeth, and it was divers from all the beasts that were before it,' Dan. vii. 7. Rev. xviii. 4.

Eighthly, It is the expectations of all the saints that Babylon be destroyed, and thrown like a mill-stone, chap. xviii. 21. Now that God hath raised this expectation in the hearts of his people, he will not frustrate their expectation, but fulfil their petitions.

Ninthly, God hath promised to destroy the scarlet whore, because she hath destroyed his saints, and she is to be rewarded, as she hath rewarded others, Chap. xv. 4. and xviii. 8.

Tenthly, The whore of Babylon shall be destroyed, because she trusted in the arm of flesh, and gloried in her strength and riches. 'How much she hath

glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her; for she saith in her heart, I sit as a queen, I am no widow, and I shall see no sorrow, therefore shall her plagues come,' Chap. xviii. 7, 8 Now beloved, consider this, and think of this, and keep yourselves from Babylon, that ye do not partake of her sins, lest ye receive of her plagues, O poor sinners I if you have any love to your souls, if you have any mind to be saved, follow the Lamb, that you may be saved by the Lamb.

He leads poor souls from darkness to light.

From death to life.

From vice to virtue.

From Satan to God.

From poverty to plenty.

From sorrow to joy.

From misery to glory.

From an earthly kingdom to an heavenly kingdom.

Come ye blessed of my Father inherit the kingdom, Matth. xxv. 42.

Oh! The kingdom which Christ leads poor souls to, is,

(1.) A rich Kingdom.

(2.) A peaceable Kingdom.

(3.) A righteous Kingdom.

(4.) A blessed Kingdom.

(5.) A glorious Kingdom.

(6.) A satisfying Kingdom.

(7.) An universal Kingdom.

(8.) An everlasting Kingdom.

O! Follow the Lamb, follow the Lamb, that you may be ever glorified with the Lamb, and by the Lamb.

F I N I S.

A C A L L

A CALL TO SINNERS;

OR

CHRIST'S VOICE TO LONDON.

REV. iii. 20. Behold I stand at the door and knock, If any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.

THE holy Scriptures are the mysteries of God, Christ is the mystery of the Scriptures. Grace is the mystery of Christ. 1 Tim. iii. 16. The Lord Jesus is our life, and the way to life, 1 Cor. ii. 7. To know him savingly, believingly, and experimentally, is life eternal, John xvii. 3. I am the way, saith Christ, John xiv. 6.

The old and good way, Jer. vi. 16.

The new and living way, Heb. x. 20.

The strait and narrow way, Matth. vii. 14.

And because poor sinners are by nature the children of wrath, and are gone out of the way, having their understanding darkned, being alienated from the life of God, thro' the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their hearts, Eph. iv. 12. And become wretched and miserable, poor, and blind, and naked, like to the Laodiceans spoken of in this chapter, ver. 17. Therefore the Lord Jesus who is full of love, full of grace, and full of pity to poor lost sinners, doth graciously invite them to come to him, that he may enrich them with gold, and clothe them with his white raiment, and anoint their eyes with eye-salve, that they may see, ver. 18. And further to shew his willingness and readiness to save souls, he tells us in the text, That he stands at the door, and knocks,

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that if any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.

In these words you have these general parts.

(1.) God's gracious offer to men, 'Behold I stand at the door, and knock.'

(2.) Men's duty in relation to God's gracious offer, 'If any man hear my voice, and open the door.'

(3.) God's gracious promise in relation to man's duty, 'I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.'

These words being thus opened, there flows from them four points of doctrine.

Doct. (1.) There is a marvellous willingness in the heart of God and Christ, to save and receive poor lost sinners.

Doct. (2.) That the heart of poor sinners are barred and bolted against the Lord Jesus.

Doct. (3.) That it is the duty and great concernment of all men whatsoever to hear God's voice, and to open the door.

Doct. (4.) That whosoever will but hear Christ's voice and open the door, he will come in to them, and sup with them, and they with him.

Neither time nor strength, beloved, will give me leave to handle all these doctrines apart, therefore I shall insist but upon one of them, which is the second, That the hearts of poor sinners are barred and bolted against the Lord Jesus.

In the prosecution of this point, I shall do three things.

(1.) Open it, that you may see it.

(2.) Prove it, that you may believe it.

(3.) Apply it, that you may receive it.

First, In the opening of it, there are three things to be explained.

(1.) The bars. (2.) The voice. (3.) The door.

(1.) I shall shew you what the bars are that bolt the doors of sinners hearts against Christ.

Beloved, they are six.

(1.) The

- (1.) The bar of ignorance.
- (2.) The bar of unbelief.
- (3.) The bar of self-conceitedness.
- (4.) The bar of earthly-mindedness.
- (5.) The bar of prejudice.
- (6.) The bar of hardness of heart.

These (my beloved) are the cursed bars which bar God and Christ, and the holy Spirit out of the heart.

I shall begin first with the bar of ignorance, and in that I shall shew you these three things.

- (1.) What ignorance is.
- (2.) What sinners are ignorant of.
- (3.) The mischievousness of this sin of ignorance.

And first, What ignorance is, Ignorance is the want of knowlege, or darkness of the understanding, for so saith the apostle Paul, Eph. iv. 18. 'Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart.' Here you may see what ignorance is; the apostle calls it darkness and blindness; so likewise in 2 Cor. xii. 3, 4. 'But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine upon them.' So that ignorance is darkness of mind, blindness of heart, and want of knowlege and spiritual understanding in the soul.

Secondly, What are sinners ignorant of?

Ans. 1. They are ignorant of God; they are ignorant of Christ, they are ignorant of the Spirit, they are ignorant of the word, they are ignorant of their own misery, they are ignorant of the necessity of a change, of being born again, of being new creatures, of being converted, and turned from darkness to light, from death to life, and from the power of Satan to the living God: such things as these, I say they are ignorant of: and this is that which keeps poor souls from going to Christ. O beloved, we have many of these

amongst us who are ignorant. It was said of the priests the sons of Eli, That they were sons of Belial, and knew not the Lord, 1 Sam. ii. 12. So in the prophecies of Jeremiah, Chap. ii. verse 8. It is said, The priests said not, where is the Lord? and they that handle the law knew me not. So the Pharisees were blind leaders of the blind, Matth. xv. 14. Would to God there were no such among our priests this day, may not that charge be drawn up against us now, as was against Israel? Hosea iv. 1, 2, 3, 9. 'Because there is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowlege of God in the land. By swearing, and lying, and killing, and stealing, and committing adultery, they break out, and blood toucheth blood. Therefore the land mourneth, and my people are destroyed for lack of knowlege: because thou hast rejected knowlege, I will also reject thee, that thou be no more a priest to me; seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children. They eat up the sins of my people, and set their hearts on their iniquity; and they are like people, like priest. Thus man errs, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God,' Matth. xxii. 20.

Thirdly, The mischievousness of this sin of ignorance.

(1.) Ignorance is that which keeps men from knowing God.

(2.) Ignorance is that which keeps men from pleasing God.

(3.) Ignorance is that which keeps men from coming to God.

(4.) Ignorance hinders men from having a propriety in God.

(5.) Ignorance is that which hardens the heart against God. O cursed and mischievous ignorance! what sin is like unto this? That is that which darkens, which hardens, which blinds and bars the doors of sinners hearts against Christ; 'O that thou hadst known (saith our dear Lord) the things which belong to thy peace, Luke xix. 42. But because they

are a people of no understanding, therefore he that made them will have no mercy on them, and he that formed them, will shew them no favour,' Isa. xxviii. 11. Thus, my beloved, I have shewed you what a wretched and miserable state such are in, that are thus ignorant.

The second bar is unbelief, which bolts and bars Christ out of the heart: this is that which makes men,

(1.) That they give not credit to the report of the gospel.

(2.) Neither do they yield that loving and loyal subjection to Christ as their Lord, where unbelief is.

(3.) Where unbelief is, it keeps off the heart from confidently believing on Christ, for that which is to be had in him, and so keeps Christ out of our souls: it is that which clips the wings of his mercy, Heb. iii. last. It is that which holds the hands of his power, Mat. xiii. 58. And he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief. It is that which lets the souls into perdition, John viii. 28. Rev. xxi. 8. The unbelieving shall have their portion in the lake of fire, which is the second death. Unbelief is that which hardneth the heart, and causeth it to depart from God; Heb. iii. 12, 13. 'Take heed brethren, lest there be in any of you, an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God: But exhort one another daily, while it is called to-day, lest any of you be hardened,' O beloved, unbelief is that also which gives God the lie. 'He that believeth not God, hath made him a liar, because he believeth not the report that God gave of his Son,' 1 John v. 10. They believe not his promises; fear not his threatnings, nor hearken to the voice of his word; tho' he sets life and death before them, heaven and hell, bitter and sweet, yet they go on in the imagination of their hearts, to add sin to sin, putting the evil day far away, but draw iniquity with cords of vanity, and sin as it were with a cart rope. O beloved, this is the state and condition of unbelievers, that is one of the bars that bolts

Christ

Christ out of the heart; as all believers are in a state of salvation, so all unbelievers are in a state of damnation; "For he that believeth not is condemned already," John iii. 18.

First, A self-conceited man is one who supposes himself to be what he is not, Gal. vi. 3. "If a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself."

Secondly, A self-conceited man is one that glorieth in his works and despiseth others, Luke xviii. 11, 14. "And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves, that they were righteous, and despised others. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. But the publican whom he despised, went away rather justified; For every one that exalteth himself shall be abased."

Thirdly, A self-conceited man is farthest from heaven of any man. "Verily I say unto you, That the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of heaven before you," (saith our Saviour) to the self-conceited Pharisee, Matth. xxi. 3.

Fourthly, A self-conceited man is one that liveth the most secure in a state of sin and misery. "And it shall come to pass, when he heareth the words of this curse, that he shall bless himself in his heart, saying, I shall have peace, tho' I walk in the imagination of my heart, to add drunkenness to thirst," Deut. xxix. 19.

Fifthly, A self-conceited man is the hardest to be wrought upon and convinced of the state and condition that he is in, of any man: because he thinks himself righteous and holy enough, and good and sound enough; thus it was with the scribes and pharisees, who had such high thoughts of themselves, that they thought themselves to be the most holy persons in the world. Mark what Christ saith to them, John ix. 12, "The whole need not a physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous

righteous, but sinners to repentance.' So also it is said, John vii. 28. Have any of the rulers, or of the pharisees believed on him? no these were very hard to be convinced and brought to own the truth.

Sixthly, A self-conceited man is one that thinks that God is made up of nothing but mercy, and therefore lives in his sins, and pleaseth himself with this, that God is merciful, he lyeth still in the ditch of sin, and crying, God help, but never endeavouring to come out, but tho' the Lord waiteth to be gracious, yet the Lord is of a good judgment, Isa. xxx. 18. O this is the sad and miserable condition of self conceited men, this is that which keepeth him from closing with Christ: this is that cursed bar which bolts the door of sinners hearts against Christ.

The fourth bar is earthly-mindedness.

First, An earthly minded man is one that minds the things of this world more than he doth Jesus Christ; this was the case of the young man in the gospel which came to Christ, and asked him, saying, 'What good thing shall I do to inherit eternal life?' Jesus bids him keep the commandments, he said unto him, All these have I kept from my youth up, what lack I yet? Jesus saith unto him, If thou wilt be perfect sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; but he being an earthly minded man, would not embrace the counsel of Christ, 'But went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.'

Secondly, An earthly minded man is one that will leave the works of God, to embrace this present world: this was Paul's complaint of Demas, 2 Tim. iv. 10. 'For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world.' (So also in Philip. ii. 21. He saith) That all seek their own, not the things that are Jesus Christ's.

Thirdly, An earthly minded man is one that will preach false doctrine for the love of money, and filthy lucre's sake. 1 Tim. vi. 10. 'For the love of money is the root of all evil, which while some have coveted after,

after, they have erred from the faith. 1 Tim. i. 18, 19. For there are many unruly and vain talkers, and deceivers, which teach things they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake. 2 Pet. ii. 15. Which hath forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness.' O beloved! I could wish that this were not too much practised in this our day, but alas! what shall I say? such is the earthly mindedness of many of the priests, that I may say of them as the blessed apostle Paul said of some in his days, Philip. iii. 19. 'Whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things.'

Fourthly, An earthly-minded man is one that trusteth in his riches, and not in God, Prov. xi. 28. 'He that trusteth in his riches, shall fall, Psal. xlix. 6, 7. They that trust in their wealth, and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches: none of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him. Therefore if riches do increase, let not your heart upon them, Psalm lxii. 10. The blessed apostle Paul doth charge them that be rich in this world, that they trust not in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us all things richly to enjoy? 1 Tim. vi. 17. Thus you may see, my beloved, that whosoever trusteth in uncertain riches, more than in God is an earthly-minded man; it is that which bars men out of the kingdom of heaven. It is the word of Christ to his disciples, Mark x. 24, 25. 'How hard is it for them that trust in riches, to enter into the kingdom of God? It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.' O beloved it is a snare, it is idolatry, Col. iii. 5. A covetousness, which is idolatry: It is the root of all evil; 1 Tim. vi. 8. 'For the love of money is the root of all evil.' Thus earthly-mindedness or covetousness, is another great sin that keeps souls from going to Christ for life and salvation. And they all with one con-

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sent began to make excuse, The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it: I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them, I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come,' Luke xiv. 18, 19, 20.

The fifth bar is prejudice, which bars Christ out of the heart. Wicked and sinful men have a great prejudice against Christ, that is, against these three things of Christ.

First, They have a prejudice against his doctrine or worship. 'Many therefore of his disciples when they heard this said, This is a hard saying, who can bear it? From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him, John vi. 60, 66. And they questioned among themselves, saying, What thing is this? What new doctrine is this?' Mat. xx. 10. Sinners have a great prejudice against the doctrine and worship of Christ, they think it too pure, too spiritual, and too powerful for them to bear.

Secondly, They have a great prejudice against the ministers, or ambassadors of Christ, they say of them as Ahab did to Micaiah, I hate him for he never prophesies good of me, 1 Kings xii. 8. So in 1 Kings xviii. 16. As Ahab said to Elijah, Art thou he that troublest Israel? So Jeremiah complains of this, saying, 'I am in derision daily, every one mocketh me, because the word of the Lord was made a reproach unto me and a derision daily,' Jer. xx. 78. So in Acts xxix. 5. It is so said of Paul, 'For we have found this man a pestilent fellow and a mover of sedition among all the Jews throughout all the world, and a ring-leader of the sect of the Nazarenes. And this is according to the word of our blessed Lord, Matth. xx. 22. And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake.'

Thirdly, Sinners have a great prejudice against the members of Christ, and that for four reasons.

First, Because they are poor, Luke i. 22, 23. 1 Cor.

Cor. i. 26, to the 30. Or despise ye the church of God, and shame them that are poor?

Secondly, Because they are but a few, Luke xi. 32. Matth. vii. 13. Deut. vii. 7. 'For ye were the fewest of all people, Rev. iii. 4. 'Thou hast a few names, even in Sardis, which have not defiled their garments.'

Thirdly, Because they are unlearned in the account of men; this is said of Christ, John vii. 15. 'How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?' Also of Peter and John it is said, Acts iv. 13. 'And when they perceived that they were unlearned, and ignorant men, they marvelled. And they took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus. Are ye also deceived? Have any of the rulers, or of the Pharisees believed on him? But this people who knoweth not the law, are cursed,' John vii. 47, 48, 49.

Fourthly, Because they will not conform to men's inventions. See 2 Cor. xi. 13, 14, 16. 'And the priests and the Levites that were in all Israel, resorted to Rehoboam, out of all their coasts: for they left their suburbs, and their possessions, and came to Judah and Jerusalem: For Jeroboam and his sons had cast them off from executing the priests office before the Lord. And after them out of all the tribes of Israel, such as set their heart to seek the Lord God of Israel, came to Jerusalem to sacrifice unto the Lord God of their fathers. See Dan. iii. 18. Be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image that thou hast set up. Also in Mat. xv. 2. Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? For they wash not their hands when they eat bread. But Jesus saith unto them, Why do ye also transgress the commandments of God by your tradition? See also Acts v. 28, 29. Did not I straitly command you, that you should not teach in his name? and behold ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring upon us man's blood upon us. Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God

ther than men. See Col. ii. 21, 22. Touch not, taste not, handle not, which are all to perish with the using, after the commandments and doctrines of men. O my dear brethren, this cursed sin of prejudice, is that which keeps sinners from receiving the truth in the love of it, and a bar which bolts Christ out of the heart.

The sixth bar is hardness of heart, which bolts the heart of sinners against Christ, and they are hardened.

First, Against God, Job ix. 4. 'Who hath hardened himself against him, and hath prospered?'

Secondly, Their hearts are hardened against his mercy, that it doth not draw them, Rom. ii. 4, 5. 'Or despisest thou the riches of the goodness, and forbearance, and long-suffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? But after thy hardness and impenitent heart, treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God.'

Thirdly, Their hearts are hardened against his judgments, that they do not tremble at them, as it is said, Exod. viii. 23. 'And Pharaoh hardened his heart at this time also, neither would he let the people go.' As it is also said, Jer. v. 22. 'Fear ye not me, saith the Lord? and will ye not tremble at my presence?'

Fourthly, Their hearts are hardened against his word, that it doth not reform them, Prov. xxix. 1. 'He that being often reprov'd, hardneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed and that without remedy, Seeing thou hatest instruction, and castest my words behind thee, Psal. l. 17. See in Jer. xlv. 16, 17. As for the word which thou hast spoken unto us in the name of the Lord, we will not hearken unto thee, But we will certainly do whatsoever cometh out of our own mouth.'

Fifthly, Their hearts are hardened against the Spirit of God that it doth not melt them. Gen. vi. 3. 'My Spirit shall not always strive with men.' As Stephen said to the Jews, Acts vii. 51. 'Ye stiff necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist

fill the holy Ghost : As your fathers did, so do ye.

Sixthly, Their hearts are hardened against all the means of grace, or gracious invitations from the people of God. 'But ye refused to hearken, and pulled away the shoulder, and stopped the ear, and made the heart like an adamant-stone, lest they should hear the law, and the words which the Lord of Hosts sent to them by his spirit in the former prophets, Zech. vii. 11, 12. They are like the deaf adder that stoppeth his ear, which will not hearken to the voice of the charmer, charming never so wisely,' Psalm viii. 4, 5. O dear friends, this is another bar which bolts Christ out of the heart of poor sinners. Thus beloved, I have shewed you what the bars are that bolt the door of our hearts against Christ, that we do not hear his voice, and open the door.

Secondly, The second thing which is here to be explained is, what this voice is which sinners are to hear? It is the voice of Christ, he is speaking to poor sinners, to open the door of their hearts, that he may come in, and sup with them.

There are two sorts of voices, by which Christ speaketh to the soul, inward voices, and outward voices.

First, inward voices. 1. The voice of conscience. The Lord Jesus speaks to sinners by their consciences. It is said of the Jews, John viii. 2. They were convinced by their own consciences. So Paul saith, Rom. ix. 1. My conscience bearing me witness. And of the Gentiles, Paul saith, Rom. ii. 15. That they did by nature the things contained in the law, their conscience also bearing them witness. And so Paul saith, 2 Cor. i. 12. Our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience. O friends! God preacheth to you many times by your consciences, which speaketh to you secretly, and powerfully, condemning and reproving you for your iniquities. O therefore hear the voice of conscience, for it is the voice of Christ; hear, I say, and hearken to it, and let Christ in, that he may sup with you.

Christ speaks to us by the voice of his spirit, as he did

did to the old world, Gen. vi. 3. 'My Spirit shall not always strive with men.' And as he did to the Jews, Acts vii. 57. 'Ye do always resist the holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye.' So in John xvi. 8. Christ tells us that the Spirit should convince the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. O the ever blessed God speaks to the world by his blessed Spirit striving with them, convincing of them, and reproving of them for their iniquities, that their souls may believe in him, and live with him to all eternity.

Secondly, There are outward voices by which Christ speaks to sinners. (1.) By the voice of his word, which is the preaching of the gospel; that is the word of reconciliation: O sinner! when thou hearest the word read, thou hearest the word of Christ. Col. i. 5. 'Whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel.' As Christ saith, John v. 26. 'Search the scriptures, for they are they which testify of me.' The voice of the scriptures is the voice of Christ; and as Christ speaks to us by them here, so he will judge us by them hereafter, Rom. ii. 19. God will judge the secrets of men by Christ Jesus, according to my gospel. John xii. 48. Where Christ saith, 'The word that I have spoken, the same shall judge them in the last day.'

Secondly, Christ speaks to sinners by the voice of his rod, by affliction and tribulations, and judgments, Micah vi. 9. 'The Lord's voice crieth unto the city, and the man of wisdom shall hear thy name, hear ye the rod and who hath appointed it.'

Thirdly, Christ speaks to sinners by the voice of his servants, Isa. l. 10. 'Who is there amongst you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servants? So in 2 Cor. v. 10. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. So in Matth. xviii. He that heareth you, heareth me.' O sinners! Christ speaks to you by the voice of his servants, and by his ministers,

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and members, who beseech you and intreat you to be reconciled, that you may have peace with God through Jesus Christ.

Having thus briefly shewed you what the voices are,

Thirdly, I shall in the third place come to shew you what the door is that Christ stands and knocks at, which sinners are to open, and let him in.

First, The first door which sinners should open unto Christ, is the door of their thoughts: I say, we must open the door of our thoughts to him, that God may be in our thoughts, and Christ in our thoughts, and the Spirit of life and power in our thoughts, and eternity in our thoughts, heaven and judgment in our thoughts. Keep this for ever in the imagination of the thoughts of the heart, 1 Chron. xxix. 10. 'How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God? How great is the sum of them? Psalm cxxxix. 17. In the multitude of the thoughts within me, thy comforts delight my soul,' Psal. xxvi. 29. O! this is the first door of our hearts, which believers open to our blessed Lord.

Secondly, The second is the door of consideration, which sinners should open to Christ: 'O that they were wise and understood this, that they should consider their latter end! Deut. xxxii. 29. The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib, but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider, Isa. xiii. The tabret, and pipe, and harp, and wive are in their feast: but they regard not the work of the Lord, neither consider the operation of his hand,' Isa. i. 12. But now those that have opened the door to Christ, they consider their ways, 'The upright considereth his ways, Prov. xxi. 29. And the wondrous works of God, Job xxxvii. 14. And what great things God hath done for him, 1 Sam. xii. 24. Therefore thus saith the Lord of hosts, consider your ways,' Hag. i. 5. And this is the second door of the heart.

The third door is the door of affections, which sinners

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ners should open to Christ, 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, Deut. vi. 5. If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema, Maranatha, 1 Cor. xv. 22. Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in truth, and sincerity, Eph. vi. 22. Set your affections on things above, and not on things beneath,' Col. iii. 2. This door of love and affection must be opened to Christ, that he may come into your hearts, and be your nearest, and dearest, your joy and delight, that you may have reconciliation with the Father, union with the Son, and communion with the holy Ghost. And this is the third door of the heart.

(4.) The fourth is the door of desire, which must be opened to Christ, or else he cannot come into our hearts, and sup with us. O sinners, you must desire and thirst after Christ vehemently, and say as the church doth in the last of the Canticles, 'Make haste, my beloved, and be thou like unto a roe, or to a young hart upon the mountain of spices. So in Rev. xxii. 20. Even so, come Lord Jesus, come quickly. So with the Psalmist, Psalm lxxiii. 25. Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee. And with the church, Isa. xxxvi. 9. With my soul have I desired thee in the night: yea, with my spirit within me, will I seek thee early: for the desire of my soul is to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee. So with Paul, I desire to know nothing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified,' 1 Cor. ii. 2. This is the fourth door of the heart which you must open to Christ, without which there is no supping with Christ, nor Christ with you.

(5.) The first is the door of estimation, which sinners must open to Christ: that is, to prize him, and to value him as more precious than all other things besides: so do believers, 1 Pet. ii. 7. Unto you therefore which believe, he is precious: and with Paul, I do count all things but dung and dirt to gain him: and also

also with Moses, To esteem the reproaches of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt, Heb. xi. 26. O! these blessed souls that have opened this door to Christ, he is to them all lovely, the chief among ten thousands, yea, he is better than rubies, and all things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto him, Prov. iii. 15. So it must be with you, poor souls, you must look upon Christ as most lovely, most precious, most desireable, and most glorious, thus he is to the Father, to the holy angels, and to the saints, and this is the fifth door of the heart.

(6.) The sixth is the door of a good conversation, which sinners as well as saints must open to Christ. For our conversation is in heaven, from whence also we look for the Saviour the Lord Jesus Christ, Phil. ii. 20. For the grace of God that bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men, teaching us, that denying ungodliness, and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, and righteously, and godly, in this present world, Titus ii. 11, 12. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved: what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, 2 Pet. iii. 11. Only let your conversation be as becometh the gospel of Christ, Psalm i. 23. And to him that ordereth his conversation aright, will I shew the salvation of God. This is the sixth door of the heart, to wit, "A good conversation:" this also must be opened to Christ, that he may come in, and sup with us, and we with him, that our souls may have fellowship and communion with him.

And thus I have briefly shewed you, beloved, what the doors are that must be opened to Christ. Now having done with the explanation, I come to the application of the point? and as I have opened it to you, that you might see, and proven it to you, that you might believe: I shall now apply it, that you may receive it.

Is it so, beloved, that the hearts of sinners are thus barred and bolted against the Lord Jesus?

Use 1. First, By way of information: this may

of use to inform us of the sad and miserable condition of all unconverted persons. 'They are wretched and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked; they are without Christ, being aliens from the common wealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenant of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world,' Eph. ii. 12. Oh sinners! this is your condition, who are graceless, and Christless persons: and though this be sad, yet this is not all; for your hearts are barred and bolted against the Lord of life and glory. O thou that hearest or readeest this, how canst thou but tremble to think, that thy heart should be thus barred and bolted against Jesus Christ, with ignorance, with unbelief, self-conceitdness, earthly-mindedness, prejudice, and hardness of heart? And yet all this while open to sin, to Satan, and the world, which are cruel enemies to the soul. That I may hasten you out of this condition, if it be the will of God, as the angels did Lot out of Sodom, Gen. xix. I shall turn my discourse into an exhortation.

Use 2. And first of all let me exhort you, whose hearts are thus barred and bolted against Jesus Christ, to hear his voice, and to open the door.

First, To hear his voice; O sinners, Christ speaks to you by your consciences, by the Spirit, by his word, by his rod, and by his servants. O you men and women of this city, God hath spoken to you by all these voices, but you have turned the deaf ear to Christ. 'The Lord's voice crieth unto the city, and the man of wisdom shall see thy name, hear ye the rod, and who hath appointed it,' Micah vi. 9. O London, London, God speaks to thee by his judgments, and because thou wouldest not hear the voice of the word, he hath made thee to feel the stroke of his rod. O great city! How hath the plague broken in upon thee because of thy abominations? 'Thus they provoked him to anger, with their inventions, and the plague brake in upon them,' Psalm cvi. 27. O you of this city? How is the wrath of the Lord kindled against you that such multitudes of thousands are fallen
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within thy borders of the noisom pestilence, God's immediate sword! London! How are thy streets thinned, thy windows increased, and thy burying places filled, thy inhabitants fled, thy trade decayed! Oh! therefore lay to heart, you that are yet alive, all these things, and turn from your wicked ways, that the cry of your prayers may outcry the cry of your sins, and be like the city of Nineveh, who believed God, and gave credit to Jonas his word, humbled themselves and fasted, and cried mightily unto the Lord, Jon. iii. 5. O let not the Heathen outstrip Christians. Did Nineveh repent, and return from their wicked ways, and shall not London? May be you may think, my brethren, that all is well now, and that God is friends with you because the sickness decreaseth and abateth, I say, blessed be God for it; but be not deceived, God is not mocked; to whomsoever God bestows great mercies, if they abound in great wickedness, he will inflict great punishments upon them. Alas, beloved! do your sins increase? And doth that abate? Is there a reformation and amendment of life among you! If this be so, then you may hope that God hath done afflicting of you. 'If my people which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wickedness, then will I forgive their sins and heal their land,' 2 Chron. vii. 14. But if you remain still as profane as before, as superstitious as before, as carnal as before, as lukewarm as before, as hard-hearted and as cruel as before, as proud and vain as before: I say, if it be thus with you, God hath not done with London yet, but hath other judgments to pour out upon you though he cause this to cease. But see how God dealt with the Jews in this case, Amos iv. 6, to the 12. 'I have given you cleanness of teeth in all your cities, and want of bread in all your places: yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord: I have also withholden the rain from you; yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord: I have smitten you with blasting and mildew, yet have

ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord, I have sent among you the pestilence, after the manner of Egypt; your young men have I slain with the sword, and have taken away your horses, and I have made the stink of your camps to come up unto your nostrils; yet have ye not turned unto me, saith the Lord. I have overthrown some of you, as God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, and ye were as a fire-brand plucked out of the burning: yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord. Therefore thus will I do unto thee, O Israel; and because I will do this unto thee, prepare to meet thy God, O Israel. Therefore my dear brethren, for God's sake, for Christ's sake, and for your souls sake, hear Christ's voice that you may be prosperous upon earth, and glorious in heaven.

Secondly, Let me exhort you, and O that I could prevail with you, to persuade you of this city, to three things.

1. That you would thoroughly turn from your evil ways, and amend your doings, that God may repent him of the evil, which otherwise he may bring upon you. O see what the Lord saith, Jer. xxvi. 3. 'If so be they will hearken, and turn every man from his evil way, that I may repent me of the evil which I propose to do unto them, because of their doings. See verse 13. Therefore now amend your ways and your doings, and obey the voice of the Lord your God, and the Lord will repent him of the evil that he hath purposed against you.' Also mark what the Lord speaketh by the prophet, Jer. vii. 3. Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, Amend your ways and your doings, and I will cause you to dwell in this place, ver. 5. If you thoroughly amend your ways and your doings, O beloved, the Lord our God is willing to heal, willing to hear, and willing to forgive. Great cities are places which are usually guilty of great sins, great provocations, and great abominations, and for this cause God hath destroyed and overthrown many cities, as Sodom and Gomorrah, Gen. xix. 24. 'Then the Lord

rained upon Sodom and Gomorrah, fire and brimstone from the Lord out of heaven.' Also Admah and Zeboim, Hof. xi. 8. 'How shall I make thee as Admah and set thee as Zeboim?' So Jerusalem and other great cities were destroyed by God for their sins and wickedness, 2 Chron. xxxv. 9. Jer. liii. 13, 14. Now see what the apostle Peter saith to this, 2 Pet. ii. 6. 'And turned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes, condemned them with an overthrow, making them an example to those that after should live ungodly.' O London! repent that it may not be so with thee, O ye people rent your hearts, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord who is willing to receive you, that his judgment may be diverted, your former mercies restored, and his blessing poured out upon you.

2. That you would dearly love, and highly prize the precious saints and servants of the most high God which are amongst you. There are they of whom the world is not worthy, Heb. xi. 28. God prizes them as his jewels and treasures, Mal. iii. 17. Exod. xix. 5. God calls them the dearly beloved of his soul, Jer. xii. 7. They are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood; a holy nation, a peculiar people, 1 Pet. ii. 9. Oh! Therefore he suffereth no man to do them wrong: yea, he reproveth kings for their sakes, Ps. cv. 4. O beloved! nations, and cities, and kings, are blessed for their sakes. See Gen. xii. 2, 3. And thou shalt be a blessing: and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse them that curse thee. O London! In this thou art happy: yea, more happy than any one city upon the face of the earth, (that I know or have heard of) because thou hast within thy borders, more righteous, more saints, more true believers, who are still sighing and mourning for thy sin, praying for thy peace, and seeking and desiring thy eternal good.

3. And lastly, Let me exhort you to open the door and let Christ in, into your thoughts, into your minds, into your affections, into your desires, into your imaginations, and into your conversations. O beloved

keep Christ out no longer, but let him into your hearts and souls, that he may make you rich, rich in faith, rich in knowledge, rich in assurance, rich in privileges, rich in experience, and rich in good works.

O therefore, let not sin be let in, and Christ shut out! O let Jesus Christ into your hearts, for if you shut the door against Christ, he will shut the door against you.

First, The door of mercy.

Secondly, The door of acceptance.

Thirdly, The door of salvation.

First, The door of mercy will be shut against you, such whom Christ calls to, and they will not hear, they shall call, but Christ will not hear, Prov. i. 14. 'Because I have called, and ye have refused, I have stretched out my hand and no man regarded. verse 28. Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer, they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me. Mine eye shall not spare, neither shall I have pity, and though they cry in mine ears with a loud voice, yet will I not hear them, Ezek. viii. 18. Therefore thus saith the Lord, behold, I will bring evil upon them, which they shall not be able to escape; and then they shall cry unto me, I will not hearken unto them, Jer. xi. 11. Because they have behaved themselves ill in their doings,' Micah iii. 4. Thus, my beloved, you see how the door of God's mercy will be shut against you, if you shut the door of your hearts against Christ.

Secondly, The door of acceptance will be shut against you, if you shut the door of your hearts against Christ. 'Thus saith the Lord unto this people, thus have they loved to wander, therefore the Lord doth not accept them when they fast, I will not hear their cry, and when they offer burnt offerings and oblations, I will not accept them, Jer. xiv. 10, 12. To what purpose cometh there incense to me from Seba, and the sweet cane from a far country? Your burnt-offerings are not acceptable, nor your sacrifices sweet unto me, Jer. vi. 20. I hate, I despise your feast-days,

days, and I will not smell in your solemn assemblies: and though ye offer me offerings, I will not accept them, Amos iv. 21, 22. O beloved! those that will not accept of Christ, shall not be accepted in Christ, who hath made us accepted in the beloved, Eph. i. 6.

Thirdly, The door of salvation will be shut against you, if you shut the door of your hearts against Christ; 'He that made you, will not save you, and he that formed you, will shew you no favour.' But as you have refused to open the door of your hearts to your Saviour, so will he refuse to own you as his people, and to open the door of salvation for you: see the words of our blest Lord himself, Luke xiii. 24, 27, 28. 'When once the master of the house is risen up, and has shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence you are, depart from me all ye workers of iniquity. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out.' Consider what hath been said, and the Lord give you understanding in all things.

The End of the first Sermon.

T H E

GREAT DAY of GOD'S WRATH.

REV. vi. 17. For the great day of his wrath is come: and who shall be able to stand?

EVERY man's thoughts run now like Nebuchadnezzar's, with a desire to know what shall come to pass hereafter, or what things time will bring forth, Dan. ii. 29. There is nothing in the womb of time, but what was first in the womb of God. Now this book of the Revelation shews us three things. (1.)

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The state and condition of the true church of Christ upon earth, under the power and rage of antichrist. (2.) The rise and rage of the antichristian world. (3.) The quiet, blessed and glorious state and condition of the true church here below, after the ruin and downfall of Antichrist, 2 Thess. ii. 8. 'Whom the Lord shall consume with the Spirit of his mouth, and destroy with the brightness of his coming.' This is decreed in heaven, and declared on earth.

First, this chapter out of which my text is taken, shows us seven things. (1.) You may see what God's dreadful judgments are, by which he cuts off, and destroys the inhabitants of the earth, for their sin and wickedness, they are likened or compared to horses, as you may see from ver. 4. to ver. 8. Here you have a red horse, the sword; a black horse, the famine; a pale horse, the pestilence, or plague which leads to death. Horses are creatures which run to and fro, and so do God's judgments from house to house, from street to street, from city to city, from town to town, and from one parish to another. And the Lord said, Go ye after him through the city, and smite; let not your eye spare, neither have you pity. Ezek. ix. 5. See Jer. v. 1, 2, 4, &c. Horses are creatures which are very swift in their motion, they run many miles in a little time, and therefore men ride them post; God's judgments are also very swift, they do much execution in a little time. 'So the Lord sent pestilence upon Israel, from the morning, even to the time appointed: and there died of the people from Dan even to Beersheba, seventy thousand men.' 2 Sam. xxiv. 15. 2 Chron. xxx. 21. You may also see a proof of this, by what God hath done to London, where there fell of the people above a thousand in one day.

(2.) You may see here where all the holy martyrs and witnesses of Jesus Christ are; Who have been slain for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus, they are under the altar, ver. 9. That is, under the glorious protection of Christ in heaven. 'They are before the throne of God, serving him day and

night; and the Lamb leads them to the living fountain, and God wipes away all tears from their eyes, Rev. vii, 17.

(3.) You may also see the cause for which these blessed souls were slain: It was for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ, Chap. vi. 9.

(4.) Here you may see that all the saints precious blood, which have been spilt from time to time by the whore of Babylon, crieth aloud, day and night to God for vengeance upon Babylon, Chapter vi. 18.

(5.) You have here the answer of God in relation to the saints cry. 'And it was said unto them that they should rest yet for a little while until their fellow-servants also, and their brethren that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled.' Chap. vi. 11.

(6.) You may here see what dreadful and terrible things follow upon the opening of the sixth seal, ver. 12, 13, 14. 'And lo there was a great earthquake, and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood, and the stars of heaven fell upon the earth, and the heavens departed as a scroll when it is rolled together, and every mountain and island were moved out of their places.' These are visible judgments of God, which are come upon the antichristian crew.

And lastly, This chapter shews us, what will be the state and condition of those men at that day, who are found enemies to God and his people, verse 15. 'And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bond-man, and every free-man, hid themselves in the dens, and in the rocks of the mountains, verse 16. And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth upon the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb.

Now this brings me to the words of my text which shews us the reason of this great out-cry: 'For the great day of his wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand?' The

The words of my text contain two things, a reason or question: (1.) The former part is the ground or reason of this out-cry, here made by kings and great men of the earth, together with every bond-man, and free-man: For the great day of his wrath is come. (2.) The latter part is a question proposed about standing at that day: And who shall be able to stand? The point of doctrine which I shall lay down from these words, is this,

Doct. That the greatest part of men and women, will not be able to stand in the great day of God's wrath.

In handling of this point I shall shew you four things. (1.) There are some days greater than others. (2.) The nature and property of this great day. And (3.) Who they are that will not be able to stand in the day of God's wrath. (4.) The use and application.

In the first place, I shall shew you, beloved, that there are some great days spoken of in the scriptures, See Jer. xxx. 7. 'Alas! for the day is great, so that none is like it; it is even the time of Jacob's trouble, but he shall be saved out of it.'

The second great day you have in Hosea i. 11. 'Then shall the children of Judah, and the children of Israel be gathered together, and appoint themselves one head, and they shall come up out of the land, so great shall be the day of Jezreel.'

The third great day you have in Joel ii. 31. 'The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and terrible day of the Lord come.'

The fourth great day you have in Mal. iv. 5. 'Behold I will send you Elijah the prophet, before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord.'

The fifth great day is this in my text. 'For the great day of his wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand?'

The sixth great day you have in Rev. xvi. 14. 'For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles,

which go forth unto the kings of the earth, and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of the great day of God Almighty.

The seventh and last great day you have in the epistle of Jude ver. 6. 'And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day.'

Thus beloved, you see that there are some days greater than others, which the scriptures call great days, because of the greatness of the work which God doth and will do in those days.

Secondly, I shall now show you the nature and property of this great day in my text, which is called the great day of God's wrath. O my brethren! this will be a very dreadful and terrible day to the wicked, who call evil good, and good evil, who put darkness for light, and light for darkness, and put far from them the evil day which is now hastening upon them.

First of all, this day will be a day of astonishment to the wicked and ungodly, as it is said, Deut. xxviii. 28, The Lord shall smite them with madness and astonishment of heart. O it will be with the wicked as it was with Nebuchadnezzar, Dan. iii. 24. Who was astonished to behold the works and wonders of God, which the Lord wrought for the deliverance of those which put their trust in him. 'Then Nebuchadnezzar the king was astonished, and rose up in haste, and spake, and said unto his counsellors, Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? They answered and said unto the king: True, O king. Verse 25 He answered and said, Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire? and they have no hurt, and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God.' O sinners, do but see here how this proud Nebuchadnezzar was astonished at the beholding of this sight: Here are three things that did astonish this great king.

First, To see the fire, whose nature is to burn, and consume,

consume, to have no power to seize upon the bodies of these men: fire is one of the cruelest creatures; it is a merciless creature, and therefore the torments of hell are set forth by fire. *Matth. xxv. 41.* 'Go ye cursed into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.'

The second thing which did astonish Nebuchadnezzar, was to see the servants of the Lord walk in the fiery furnace: Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the flames. They were cast in bound, but now they are loose; now that the fire should have power on their bonds, but not on their bodies. O this caused astonishment in Nebuchadnezzar.

The third thing that did astonish him, was to see their number not decreased, but increased: Did not we cast in three men bound into the fire? and lo, I see four men walking in the midst of the fire; and the form of the fourth is like unto the Son of God. Now this did astonish this great king; now as it was with Nebuchadnezzar here, so will it be with the wicked in this great day: O you that now speak proudly, look highly, and walk contemptuously, it will astonish you to see God's judgments poured out upon you, and his wrath wax hot against you, till there be no remedy. O do but see the text, *Jer. li. 37.* 'And Babylon shall become as heaps, a dwelling place for dragons, an astonishment, and an hissing without an inhabitant.' Thus it will be with the ungodly at that day.

2. It will be a day of terror to those that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of Christ; The terror of God will be upon such, as it was upon those cities, *Gen. xxxv. 5.* O ye graceless persons that now fear not God, nor tremble at his word, he will make you then tremble, as he did Belshezzar when he beheld the hand-writing, *Dan. v. 6.* 'Then the king's countenance was changed, and his thoughts troubled him, so that the joints of his loins were loosed, and his

his knees smote one against another.' O ye drunkards and swearers, you that despise reproof, and hate instruction, and set at nought all God's counsel: know this, that the day of God's wrath will be a day of terror to you, which will make your hearts to sink within you, your countenance to change, your joints to be loosed, and your ears to tingle, when the terrors of the Almighty set themselves in array against you. Therefore saith the apostle, 2 Cor. ii. 11. 'Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men.'

3. The day of God's wrath, will be a day of distress to the wicked. * When your fear shall come as desolation, and your destruction as a whirlwind, when distress and anguish cometh upon you, Prov. i. 27. So see that in Zeph. i. 15, 17, 18. That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasteness and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness; and I will bring distress upon men, that they shall walk like blind men, because they have sinned against the Lord; and their blood shall be poured out as dust, and their flesh as the dung, neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of the Lord's wrath.' O the distress that ungodly men will be in, in that day, which will make them cry to the rocks and mountains to fall on them, and hide them from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb. The God of heaven will bring distress upon all sorts of men, which shall be found ungodly, and their honour shall not deliver them, nor their gold deliver them, nor their silver deliver them, nor the greatness of their multitudes deliver them, but distress will come upon them, as it did upon Saul. 1 Sam. xxviii. 15. 'And Saul answered, I am sore distressed, the Philistians make war against me, and God is departed from me, and answereth me no more, neither by prophets, nor by dreams. See Luke xxi. 23. And there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people.'

Can

Can you hear this, and not tremble at it? O ye that are profane.

Fourthly, This day of God's wrath, will be a day of great contempt to the ungodly. 'The Lord of hosts purposed it, to stain the pride of all glory, and to bring into contempt all the honourable of the earth,' Isa. xxiii. 9.

O the enemies of the Lord, and such as oppose his truth, will be then hissed at. O do but see that place, Jer. li. 27. 'And Babylon shall become heaps, a dwelling place for dragons, an astonishment, and an hissing without an inhabitant. The Lord will pour contempt upon all forts of men, which have sided with the whore of Babylon, and drunk of her cup: they will not know whither to go, nor where to hide their heads; but every one will hiss at them, and have them in derision, saying, these are they who said, It is vain to serve the Lord, and what profit is there in keeping his ordinances, and in walking mournfully before the Lord of hosts? Who counted saints sots, and godliness to be madness: therefore will they be contemptible before the Lord, angels, and good men. O think of this, you that speak proudly, and blasphemously against God and his people, know assuredly, that God will speak to you in his wrath, and vex you in his sore displeasure, 'He that sitteth in heaven shall laugh: the Lord shall have you in derision,' Psalm ii. 4.

Fifthly, This day of God's wrath, will be a day of great destruction; 'Have ye not asked them that go by the way, and do not ye know their tokens? that the wicked is reserved to the day of destruction: They shall be brought forth to the day of wrath,' Job xxi. 29, 30. In this day the Lord will destroy both evil persons and evil things. Men and their idols, men and their inventions. 'Every plant which is not of God's planting, shall be plucked up; and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day; and the idols he shall utterly abolish in that day: a man shall cast away his idols of silver, and his idols of gold,

gold, which they have made; each one for himself to worship, to the moles, and to the bats; to go in to the cleft of the rocks, and into the tops of the ragged rocks, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his Majesty, when he ariseth to shake terribly on the earth, Isa. ii. 17, 18, 19, 20, 21. All false ways, false worship, and false doctrines, shall fall in that day, this will be a reaping day, God will empty the earth, as the prophet Isaiah speaks, Chap. xxiv. 1, 2, 3. Behold the Lord maketh the earth empty, and maketh it waste, and turneth it upside down, and scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof; and it shall be as with the people, so with the priest; as with the servant, so with the master; as with the maid, so with the mistress; as with the buyer, so with the seller; as with the lender, so with the borrower; as with the taker of usury, so with the giver of usury to him: The land shall be utterly emptied, and utterly spoiled: For the Lord hath spoken this word. So Joel iii. 13, 14. Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe; come get ye down, for the press is full, the fats overflow, for their wickedness is great, multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision: For the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision. So in Rev. xiv. 15. The angels are appointed to reap down the earth. O let every one that hears or reads these sayings, let them hear and fear, and tremble at them; for this will be a day of great destruction to the wicked and ungodly.

Sixthly and lastly, This will be a great day of wrath, as it is said in the words of my text, 'For the great day of his wrath is come.' But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire. O beloved! this is not the day of man's wrath, men have had their days of reigning and raging, and lording over God's people, but now this is over and gone, and now God's day is come, and this is the day of his wrath, and wo to the earth, and wo to the sea, and wo to the whore of Babylon, for the hour of her judgment is come.

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O beloved! God's wrath will be very terrible to the wicked. (1.) It will tear them to pieces like a lion. 'For I will be unto Ephraim as a lion, and as a young lion to the house of Judah: I even I will tear and go away: I will take away and none shall rescue him, Hof. v. 14. So Job xvi. 9. The Lord tearerth me in his wrath. So Psal. l. 22. Now consider this all ye that forget God, lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver.' (2.) It consumes like fire. 'For behold, the day cometh that shall burn like an oven, and all the proud, yes, and all that do wickedly shall be stubble, and the day that cometh shall burn them up saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch, Mal. iv. 1. Therefore have I poured out my indignation upon them, I have consumed them with the fire of my wrath,' Ezek. xxi. 31.

(3.) It swallows up like a dragon. 'He hath devoured me, he hath crushed me, he hath swallowed me like a dragon, Jer. li. 34. Thou shalt make them as a fiery oven in the time of thine anger: the Lord shall swallow them up in his wrath, and the fire shall devour them,' Psal. xxi. 9. Oh! the wrath of the Almighty, is that which tears like a lion, consumes like a fire, and swallows up like a dragon, and therefore it is called in the scripture, fierce wrath, 2 Kings xxiii. 26. See Psal. lxxviii. 49. He casts upon them the fierceness of his anger, wrath and indignation, and trouble. So in Rev. xvi. 19. It is said, 'And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath.' Thus beloved, I have shewed you the nature and property of this great day spoken of in my text.

1. A day of astonishment. 2. A day of terror. 3. A day of distress. 4. A day of contempt. 5. A day of destruction. 6. A day of wrath.

I shall now come in the third place, to show you who they are that will not be able to stand in this great day. First,

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First, Such as are profane will not be able to stand in this great day, but say to the mountains, fall on us, and to the hills cover us, Luke xxiii. 30. Because they have filled the midst of thee with violence, and thou hast sinned: therefore I will cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God: and I will destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire, Ezek. xxviii. 16. So Rom. ii. 9. Tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doth evil. O ye profane! ye that now wallow in your sins, as the sow in the mire, and eat up sin as they eat bread, and drink up iniquity like water! O! let me tell you, you will not be able to stand in the day of wrath, nor in the day of judgment: but destruction will be your end, and everlasting misery your portion. O! that such would but consider these two places of scripture, Philip. iii. 19. 'Whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things.' So that also in 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10. Know ye not, that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived, neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. 'Tho' these men may now carry it out with a high hand, as if they had 'made a covenant with death, and with hell they were at an agreement; but your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your covenant with hell shall not stand, when the overflowing scourge shall pass thro', then ye shall be trodden down by it,' Isa. xxxviii. 15, 18.

Secondly, Such as are ignorant, will not be able to stand in this great day of God's wrath, 'When the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven, with his mighty angels in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.' 2

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Thes. i. 7, 8, 9. O you that are ignorant and blind, do you hear this? You are some of those who will not be able to stand in this great day, but say to the rocks, fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb. Beloved, I told you in the morning, that ignorance is one of these cursed sins, that bars and bolts Christ out of the heart: it is that which shuts them out from having mercy and favour with the Lord: See Isa. xxvii. 11. 'For it is a people of no understanding: therefore he that made them, will have no mercy on them, and he that formed them, will shew them no favour.'

Thirdly, Such as have sided with Antichrist against Christ, will not be able to stand in this great day, such as have drunk of the whore's cup of fornication, shall drink of the cup of God's indignation, which is poured out without mixture. 'If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture, into the cup of his indignation, and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb,' Rev. xiv. 9, 10. O beloved, all those that have been partakers with her in sinning, shall be partakers with her in her suffering, therefore come out of her my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues, Rev. xviii. 4. All that cursed brood of Rome, with all the antichristian crew, will not be able to stand in this great day of God's wrath, but will be consumed like fowel, and devoured as stubble fully dry: See Nabum i. 9, 10. 'What do ye imagine against the Lord? He will make an utter end: affliction shall not rise up the second time. For they be folded together as thorns; and while they are drunken as drunkards, they shall be devoured as stubble fully dry.' So that all those who have assisted Antichrist against Christ, against his government, against his gospel, against his Spirit,

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Spirit, against his worship, against his ministers, against his members, and against his glorious cause; I say they will not be able to stand in this great day of God's wrath, but cry to the rocks and mountains to fall on them, and to hide them from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb, Rev. vi. 16.

Fourthly, Such as have a form of godliness and deny the power thereof, will not be able to stand in this great day of God's wrath; 'Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof, from such turn away,' 2 Tim. iii. 5. All idle and slothful professors, who have nothing of God, and nothing of Christ, nor nothing of the Spirit, nor nothing of the power of the word in them, having only a notional or formal profession; such, I say, will not be able to stand in this great day. See Rom. ii. 17, 19, 20. 'Behold, thou art called a Jew, and retest in the law, and makest thy boast of God, and art confident that thou thyself art a guide of the blind, an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes, which hast the form of knowledge, and of the truth in the law. But mark what God saith to such, verse 24. Thou that makest thy boast of the law, thro' breaking the law, dishonourest thou God? verse 24. For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles, thro' you. O! are there not many amongst us who profess God in words, but deny him in works, who have a name to live, and are dead, who have a form, but not the power, who have all without, and nothing within? like those in Mat. vii. 22. there spoken of by Christ, 'Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils! and in thy name done many wonderful works! verse 23. And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me all ye that work iniquity.'

Fifthly, Such as are idle shepherds, and blind guides will not be able to stand in this great day of God's wrath, but will cry to the rocks and mountains to fall

fall on them, and to hide them from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb. For this see a few scriptures, among many what the Lord speaketh against idle shepherds, and blind guides, who feed themselves and not the flock of Christ. See Ezek. xxxiv. 2, 3, 4. Thus saith the Lord God unto the shepherds, Wo be to the shepherds of Israel, that do feed themselves; should not the shepherds feed the flock? Ye eat the flesh, ye clothe you with the wool, ye kill them that are fed: but ye feed not the flock. The diseased have you not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound up that which was broken, neither have ye brought again that which was driven away, neither have ye sought that which was lost: But with force and with cruelty have ye ruled them. verses 9, 10. Therefore, O ye shepherds, hear the word of the Lord, thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I am against the shepherds and I will require my flock at their hand, and cause them to cease from feeding the flock, neither shall the shepherds feed themselves any more, for I will deliver my flock from their mouth, that they may not be meat for them. For both prophet and priest are profane, yea, in my house have I found their wickedness, saith the Lord. Therefore thus saith the Lord of hosts concerning the prophets, Behold I will feed them with wormwood, and make them drink the water of gall: For from the prophets of Jerusalem is prophaneſs gone forth into all the land, Jer. xxxiii. 11, 15. See also Hosea iv. from verse 1. to the 11. Mark also what our Lord Jesus Christ saith, Matth. xxiii. 14. of idle shepherds and blind guides, Wo unto you scribes and pharisees, hypocrites; for ye devour widows houses, and for a pretence make long prayers; therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation.

Thus you see beloved, that the scriptures with open mouth do speak forth the desolation and calamities which will befall idle shepherds and blind guides in that

that day: and if they cannot stand when his wrath is kindled but a little, O what will they do when wrath shall come upon them to the utmost, even the fierceness of his wrath? then will they not be able to stand.

Sixthly, Such as are hypocrites will not be able to stand in this day of God's wrath, but desire if it were possible, to hide themselves in the dens and caves of the earth. And the people shall be as the burning of lime, as thorns cut up shall they be burnt in the fire, hear ye that are afar off, what I have done, and ye that are near, acknowledge my might: The sinners of Sion are afraid, fearfulness hath surprized the hypocrites. Who among us shall dwell with devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings? See Job viii. 13. So are the paths of all that forget God, and the hypocrites hope shall perish. Verse 14. Whose hope shall be cut off, and whose trust shall be a spider's web. Verse 15. He shall lean upon his house, but it shall not stand; he shall hold it fast, but it shall not endure. O thou hypocrite, whoever thou art, notwithstanding thou hast gotten the taking part of religion, and makest a shew of godliness, yet all this while thou art a dissembler in thy heart. See Jer. xlii. 20, 21, 22. For ye dissembled in your hearts, when ye sent me unto the Lord your God, saying, Pray for us unto the Lord our God, and according unto all that the Lord our God shall say, to declare unto us, and we will do it. And now I have this day declared it to you, but ye have not obeyed the voice of the Lord your God, nor any thing for the which he hath sent me unto you. Now therefore know certainly, that ye shall die by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence, in the place whither ye desire to go, and to sojourn. Do you hear this, you that are hypocrites, that God hates such and will punish them with great punishments? He will cut them asunder, and give them their portion with the reprobates, and cast them away into everlasting burning, Mat. xxiv. 51.

Seventhly,

Seventhly and lastly, All such as love not the Lord Jesus Christ in truth and sincerity, will not be able to stand in this great day of God's wrath: whether they be Turks or Jews, Papists or Protestants, bond or free, all is one, for they will not be able to stand, if they love not the Lord Jesus Christ. See 1 Cor. xvi. 22. if any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha. O beloved, all those that shall be found unbelievers, unconverted, and unregenerate in the day of God's wrath, be they kings, or great men, or rich men, or chief captains, or mighty men, or free men, they shall cry to the mountains and rocks, saying, Fall on us and cover us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: for the great day of his wrath is come. Thus beloved, I have shewed you briefly in seven particulars, who they are that will not be able to stand in that day of God's wrath. (1.) The profane. (2.) The ignorant. (3.) They that side with Antichrist against Christ. (4.) The formal professor. (5.) The idle shepherds, and blind guides. (6.) The hypocrites. (7.) And lastly, They that love not the Lord Jesus Christ.

Object. But, beloved, it may be you will say, if, none of these will be able to stand, who then will?

Answer, All those that shall be found having on the wedding garments, and in the Spirit of the Lamb will be able to stand in this day, and they are these.

(1.) They that overcome, Rev. ii. 10. Chap. iii. 21. Chap. xii. 11. Chap. xxi. 11. (2.) They that keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ, Rev. xii. 17. Chap. vi. 9. (3.) They that stand with the Lamb, Rev. xiv. 1. Chap. xvi. 14. (4.) They that have their Father's name written in their foreheads, Rev. xiv. 1. (5.) They that sing a new song, Chap. xiv. 3, 4. (6.) They that are redeemed from the earth, ver. 3. (7.) They that follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth, ver. 4. (8.) They that are not defiled with the pollutions of the whore of Babylon, and in their mouth

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is found no guile, verse 5. Now beloved, these are they that will be able to stand in this great day of God's wrath, when others shall not be able, but call to the rocks and mountains to fall on them. I shall now proceed in the fourth place, to the use and application of this point.

Use 1. And first of all by way of information, if it be so, that the greatest part of men and women will not be able to stand in this great day of God's wrath, this may inform us of three things. That as men have had their day, so God will have his day. Men have had their day of sinning, God will have his day of punishing. Men have had their days of treasuring up of wrath, God will have his day of pouring out of his wrath. Men have had their day of defiling, God will have his day of refining. Men have had their day of fornication. God will have his day of indignation. 'For the day of the Lord is near upon all the Heathen: as thou hast done, so it will be done unto thee, thy reward shall return upon thine own head,' Obadiah verse 15.

That though God beareth with sinners in the day of his patience, yet he will not bear with them in the day of his wrath, 'Go thro' the city and smite it; let not your eyes spare it, neither have ye pity,' Ezek. ix. 5. O beloved! in the day of God's patience, he beareth with you, and waiteth to be gracious. O how many hundred years hath God born with the whore of Babylon, notwithstanding of her great provocations and wickedness? But now is the day of his wrath, and the Lord will not spare her, nor shew pity on her, but pour out his wrath and indignation upon her to the utmost. 'Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burnt with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her, Rom. xviii. 8. O see the terrible word, Isa. xlii. 13, 14. 'The Lord shall go forth as a mighty man, he shall stir up jealousy like a man of war: he shall cry, yea, sore: he shall prevail against his enemies, I have long

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long time holden my peace, I have been still and refrained myself: now will I cry like a travailing woman: I will destroy and devour at once.' Do you see this, sinners? how God is resolved to proceed against you in the day of his wrath, tho' he bears with you in the day of his patience? (3.) This day of God's wrath will be a very dreadful and terrible day to the wicked, as appears by what hath been said. O sinners! it will be a day of astonishment, a day of terror, a day of distress, a day of contempt, a day of destruction, a day of wrath, Oh! it will be a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness, Joel ii. 2. 'The great day of the Lord is near, it is near and hasteth greatly, even the voice of the day of the Lord, The mighty men shall cry there bitterly. The day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasting and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of thick darkness,' Zeph. i. 14, 15. O who is able to express the terror of the Almighty in the day of his wrath! O that every soul that hears me this day, would lay it to heart, and consider with themselves that they may be able to stand in this day of God's wrath. And so much for this use of information.

Use 2. By way of examination and self-trial: O friends! How much doth it concern you and me, to examine our standing, that we may be able to stand in the day of God's wrath, which is coming so fast upon us. O you see, how that his wrath is but a little kindled, and yet how hard a matter it is for men to stand out to abide it! Thousands have been sent to their graves by it. and many thousands have left their habitations because of it. and are fled out of the city unto several parts of this kingdom for refuge. O what a sad and doleful place hath this city been for several weeks past! the greatest trade which hath been here among us, was to bury the dead, and attend the sick. O now, my brethren, if this little be so much; what will it be when the great day of his wrath is come?

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Who will then be able to stand? O therefore examine yourselves, and try yourselves, examine your faith, whether it be true; your knowledge, whether it be sanctified; your hope, whether it be purified; your love whether it be sincere; your evidences, whether they be sound; your hearts whether they be gracious; your desires, whether they be holy; your ends, whether they be right; and your conversation, whether heavenly; that ye may be able to stand in the day of God's wrath, in the day of death, and in the day of judgment, 2 Cor. xiii. 5.

Use 2. By way of exhortation. And I shall be brief, lest I should intrude too much upon your patience, but I hope you will not think the time long for it may be the last sermon that I may preach to you may hear. Well, beloved, is it so, that the greatest part of men and women will not be able to stand in the great day of God's wrath? Give me leave therefore to exhort you to these three things.

First, You that are sinners to repent of your sins. For he that confesseth and forsaketh shall have mercy, Prov. xxviii. 13, 14. 'He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but he that confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy. Happy is the man that feareth always: but he that hardneth his heart shall fall into mischief.' O sinners! you have grievously sinned against God; you have deserved as many hells as you have committed sins: you have sinned against his mercies: you have abused his patience: you have resisted his Spirit: you have disobeyed his gospel: you have made light of his ministers, and have hated his members. O sinners! all this have ye done, and yet the Lord hath spared you: and though you have sinned at so high a rate, yet God hath given you space to repent: O let his goodness lead you to repentance, that you die not in your sins. O therefore! for God's sake, and for Christ's sake, be prevailed withal: why should you die, seeing God would have you live? why will you damn yourselves, why will you go to hell, seeing God would have you go to heaven? O

do you see what the Lord saith, Isa. i. 18. 'Come sinner, saith the Lord, and let me and thee reason together, though thy sins be as scarlet, they shall be as snow; though they be red as crimson, they shall be white like wool.' Verily, if you have not hearts of stone, methinks these words should melt you to see the love, the pity, the mercy, and willingness of God to do your souls good.

Secondly, Let me exhort you to get an interest in the Lord Jesus, that you may be able to stand in the day of his wrath; O sinners! there will be no standing before Christ, without an interest in Christ. O sinners! Go to Christ, his promises are open to you, his arms are open to embrace you, his Spirit is ready to assist you, and his people to own you; and his angels are ready to attend you, and heaven itself is ready to receive you. O sinners! if you will but come to Christ, you shall be reconciled to the Father, justified by the Son, you shall be sanctified by the Spirit, you shall be delivered from wrath, you shall be made the children of God, you shall have your names enrolled in the book of life. And finally you shall be received into everlasting glory at the end of your days. O therefore let this prevail with you to go to Christ, for light, for life, for grace, for strength, and for comfort and peace, that of his fulness you may receive grace for grace, John i. 16.

Thirdly and lastly, Let me now exhort you, who are dead to sin, separated from the world, espoused to Christ, reconciled to the Father, to walk worthy of God, who hath called you to his kingdom and glory, 1 Thes. ii. 12. O ye precious saints, let me exhort you to keep your lamps burning, your loins girded, your lives holy, and your hearts upright, your judgments sound, your consciences pure, and your garments unspotted: and be not troubled at God's dealing and dispensations, though he takes away from you those that are precious to you: For as he sends the wicked to hell, that they may dishonour him no more, so he takes away the righteous to heaven, that they may glorify

glorify him more. There seems to be four reasons why God sweeps away the righteous with the wicked by the pestilence.

1. Because they have finished their work.
2. From the evil time.
3. For the humbling the rest which remain behind.
4. For the hardning of the wicked.

Therefore ye precious saints, ye ought to be quiet, and to submit to the will of God, and to say as David, 'I was dumb, and opened not my mouth, because thou didst it,' Psalm lix. 9. Now I beseech you both saints and sinners, to consider of these things: and the God of heaven give you understanding in all things which concern his glory, and your eternal good. The end of the second Sermon.

WATCH AND PRAY.

MARK xiv. 38. Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation.

AS Christ is the church's friend, so Satan is the church's enemy, her greatest enemy, her cruellest enemy, her worst enemy, her continual enemy.

He that makes war against the remnant of her seed, who kept the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ, Rev. xii. 16. The devil envieth our happiness, and seeketh our ruin.

1. By tempting of us, 1 Cor. xv.
2. By persecuting of us, 1 Thes. ii. 15.
3. By accusing of us, Rev. xii. 10.
4. By hindering of us, 1 Thes. ii. 18.
5. By beguiling of us, 2 Cor. xi. 3.

O beloved! the devil is the great troubler of saints, the great deceiver of nations, the great devourer of souls, the great enemy of mankind, 'Who goeth about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour,' 1 Pet. v. 8.

But

But now here is the church's happiness that Christ is her friend, Cant. iv. 15. Her greatest friend, her dearest friend, her loving friend, her best friend, her constant friend, her sympathizing friend, her mighty friend. By his blood she overcomes the devil, by his grace she resists the devil, by his might she treads him under her feet; and by faith in his word, she quenches all the fiery darts of the devil.

O! tho' Satan hate us, Christ loves us; tho' Satan condemn us, Christ justifies us; tho' Satan accuse us, Christ clears us; tho' Satan tempt us, Christ strengthens us; tho' Satan seeks to destroy us, Christ preserves us; tho' Satan buffets us, Christ assists us, 1. By his Spirit. 2. By his promises. 3. By his graces. 4. By his presence. 5. By his word. 6. By his intercession. 7. By his power. 8. By his ministers. 9. By his example. 10. By his prayer.

O! The Lord Jesus hath a great love for us, and care of us; and therefore he counsels us in the words of my text, 'To watch and pray, lest we enter into temptation.'

These are the words of our Lord Jesus to his disciples; they having been slumbering and sleeping; when Christ hath commanded them to watch. They contain,

I. A supposition of their entering into temptation, upon which Christ grounds a mandatory exhortation, shewing them the way how to avoid it, in these words 'Watch and pray,' &c.

Hence we may raise these two points of doctrine.

Doct. I. That a child of God is attended with temptations.

Doct. II. That the only way to avoid the evil of temptation is to watch and pray.

For the first of these we may observe this method.

(1.) Of the tempter. (2.) Of the temptation. (3.) Of the manner of their working, with reasons why they have so much power. First, We have four several tempters in scripture.

First, God tempting men, that is trying and proving men, as in Deut. viii. 2. That God tempted Abraham,

Gen. xxi. 1. which is interpreted, Heb. xi. 17. By faith Abraham when he was tried, offered up Isaac. &c. This tempting is not evil, nor for our hurt, but God tempts upon these accounts, (1.) For the trial of his peoples fear, as in that of Abraham, Gen. xii. 11. 'For now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thine only son from me.' (2.) God tempts for the trial of their faith: he proves them in some things that is near and dear to them, perhaps deprives them of some special necessary mercy, to see whether they can trust him, and believe in the want of it, whether they can live by faith in the God of mercies, when the mercies are gone, as it is written, 'The just shall live by faith,' Heb. x. 38. Rom. i. 27. Again, (3.) The Lord tempts for the proof of their obedience; and thus the Lord speaks to Abraham after the trial, 'And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.' Why? 'Because thou hast obeyed my voice.' In all this the Lord seeth what is in our hearts, as he said to Israel of old, Deut. viii. 2. We may find men tempting God too, that is, provoking God to jealousy and wrath, thus did the children of Israel at the waters of Meribah, Deut. vi. 16. 'Ye shall not tempt the Lord your God. Exod. vii. 2. Wherefore do ye tempt the Lord?' But first of all, we tempt God when we doubt of his power, as when we are in an strait or difficulty, we mistrust the power of God to deliver us, or bestow any mercy upon us which we stand in need of, as the lord did, on whose hand the king leaned, who said, 'If the Lord should make windows in heaven, might this thing be?' when God had promised in time of famine, that on the morrow there should be plenty, 2 Kings vii. 2.

Secondly, We tempt God, where we doubt of his mercy, for God is mercy in the abstract, and it is part of his glorious title: therefore he cannot endure to lose so great a part of his honour, but is provoked by it.

Thirdly, When we call his faithfulness in question, what greater disparagement or more disgraceful thing

can there be to man, than to be wrongfully accused, for falsifying his word? Then how much greater provocation is it to the great God, to be impeached for the breach of promise, and counted unfaithful, who cannot lie, Heb. vi. 18.

Lastly, When we murmur at the hand of God, at any of his judgments, this Israel did at Meribah, Exod. xvii. 2. 3. And this doth exceedingly inflame and excite the wrath of God: we cannot dispose of ourselves, and yet we are angry at the providence of an all wise God: we sin, and are troubled, that God corrects us for sin.

Thirdly, In the next place, Our lusts are tempters, as James i. 14. 'Every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own hearts lusts, and enticed.' Our lusts strive within us to be sinfully satisfied, and the flesh wars against the spirit, the heart sometimes alluring, and this comes to pass,

1. By presenting some sinful object: it is good not to nourish such conceptions, but strangle them in their first appearance, else sinful thoughts grow upon us.

2. By presenting some desirableness in the object, but be quick-sighted; sin however it seems fair upon some colourable pretext, is indeed, upon good deliberation not at all to be desired, but sometimes it comes clothed in such a glorious garb, as if it meant no harm, that you must be fain to flee to God by prayer against this temptation.

3. There is a persuasion to consent to the sin, but be not easily persuaded to offend your Father. Oh! how will our lust gain upon us, if we do not resist? Strive with all your might; the greater your allurements to sin is, the greater the sin is, I appeal to saints' experience.

In the fourth and last place, We have the devil tempting men: he is called the tempter, Matth. iv. 1. 3. Mark i. 13. And indeed this is the grand tempter, that makes use of our lusts, as a subservient organ or instrument, for his temptations against the soul, and indeed, were it not for our lusts, it would

be in vain for Satan to tempt; as we see in Christ there was nothing for Satan to take hold of, Christ being without sinful lusts, but Satan must come by the word of mouth to tempt him, Mat. iv. 12. But here it may be enquired, How shall I know when Satan raiseth the temptation?

First, I answer, When it comes strongly and forcibly upon the soul, as it were with a double power even overflowing the soul, almost at the first encounter, there is double strength in the stroke.

Secondly, When it is of long continuance, as this was, which Paul besought the Lord thrice for, 1 Cor. xii. 8. Satan stirs up the heart afresh, and the lusts of the heart, when the fire is ready to die and go out, he blows it up again, adds life and strength to the temptation, which else could not last long.

The lusts they are the combustible matter, and Satan he enflames and sets them on fire.

The temptation, when tho' it may be weak at the first, yet at length by degrees, it grows stronger and stronger: Satan begins to reason with, and persuade the soul by plausible arguments.

Thirdly, We may perceive the working of the serpent, the devil, when the temptation is full of wiles, and subtle delusion, Eph. vi. 11. 2 Tim. ii. 10. Rev. ii. 24. The more intricate and full of subtilty the temptation is, the more cause there is to suspect. Satan is very busy for ensnaring the soul.

Fourthly and lastly, The more it is in direct opposition to God in his commands, or the like, we may be the more sure it is of Satan's framing, for the heart and its lusts seek for satisfaction, and then are still. (Satan join not) tho' God be not so directly opposite, but the devil strikes always at God in his temptations; or if not always, yet most frequently.

Thus much for the tempter, now for the temptation itself. There are several sorts of temptations, but to reduce them all to these three heads, they do concern and strike at.

First of all God; this being Satan's great aim, to

oppos

oppose God; as two enemies always in direct opposition one to another; and thus he tempts either first, as to the being of God, calling in question the very truth of the essence of the great God, causing the soul to doubt whether there be a God or no: like Pharaoh, 'Who is the Lord?' Exod. v. 2.

But, Secondly, Some temptations touch upon the nature of God, as to the nature of his being, the mystery of the three distinct Persons, as to their offices, and operations in the individual Godhead, God the Father, God the Son, and God the holy Spirit; and yet all but one God, blessed for ever. Again, as to those unseparable divine attributes of God, his independency, purity, immutability, greatness and eternity, his goodness, grace, mercy, love, patience and justice, I say, sometimes doubting of these things is our temptation: Yea, and could Satan prevail, we should flatly deny his being, nature, properties, and all. Look sternly on, and resist strongly such temptations as these, which do immediately and presumptuously intrench upon God's sovereign and just prerogative. And if I mistake not, a great device of Satan's in this stratagem is, to persuade the creatures from all dependence upon the Creator, that so being left to itself, and standing upon its own strength, he may more easily destroy it. For what is the creature, without the Creator's power?

Again some temptations touch our spiritual being, such as are an evil heart of unbelief, mistrusting the grace of God, despairing of the goodness of our condition, Satan would fain raze the very foundation of spiritual existence, adoption, justification, and hopes of salvation, it is his great design to shake the very ground work of this building, and to persuade that all is false. But this temptation is fruitless, when we build aright upon a good foundation by faith accompanied with repentance from dead works upon Christ Jesus, as the alone Author and meritorious cause of our justification, and eternal glorification.

Lastly, Satan by his fiery darts strikes at our well-being

being to disturb our peace, by the omission of some duty, or commission of some sin: when he finds he cannot prevail to destroy our being, then he would deprive us of our well-being, our joy and comfort, but know, though these temptations may trouble us, yet they shall never destroy us.

Now for the manner of these temptations, how they work.

First, When all fall under want, strait, change of providence, or the like, then is a time for temptation to work; as when Christ had fasted, and was an hungered, then comes the tempter, "If thou be the Son of God command that these stones be made bread," Math. iv. 3.

Secondly, When we are first turned from sin to God, then we are sure to meet with a tempter, Satan will be busy.

Thirdly, When ye are troubled, dejected, disconsolated, either as to the outward or inward estate, then beware of Satan's temptations, he will be furthering our disquietment.

Fourthly, When we are arrived to some good hopes through grace, or some confidence in the mercy of God the Father through his Son Jesus Christ, then also shall we find the battering assaults of Satan to shake our confidence; but be sure always that the ground of our confidence be good, established upon the everlasting rock, Jesus Christ: for if I mistake not my observation, there are two great rocks which Satan strives to split a soul upon, presumption and despair.

Sometimes endeavouring to cause souls to flatter up themselves, and think grace is theirs, Christ is theirs, and all is theirs, when it is nothing so; but by this he might carry them blind to hell, hood-winking their souls so, that they never come to see thoroughly that they are in a bad condition, but think always their condition is good. The other rock is despair; Satan striving, if he cannot blind them, as he doth the other presumptuous souls, yet to make them go sorrowing

all their days, thinking they shall never obtain that mercy which others think they always had.

Fifthly, Satan suits his temptations to our dispositions; he hath various objects for divers spirits, for the proud haughty soul; for the lustful heart, for the covetous worldling, for the prodigal son, for the rash-giddy brain, for the sluggish drone, for the melancholy person; for the light cheerful spirit; especially these two; either sinking the one in the terrible ways of black and dreadful thoughts, or tossing and lifting up the other with the wind of foolish fancy. Oh, what black apprehensions shall the one have of itself, and God, and what light and slight thoughts the other of their present state, and of eternity.

Lastly, Satan aims to lull the soul asleep in carnal security; and to this end presents great sins as small and little sins (if any there be) as none at all. But sometimes he will add by temptations, as it were a multiplying glass with a ghastly countenance, is thought to be the sin against the Holy Spirit, as unpardonable sin.

Having thus shown how, and upon what occasion Satan works, I shall take occasion to enquire, Why they have so much power as many times to prevail.

(1.) Because of the tempter's power; he is perhaps too strong for the soul.

(2.) Because of the tempter's policy, if he cannot prevail by open force, the soul being well and strongly grounded, then he invades by subtil devices, and secret stratagems, so that the soul cannot escape by strength only; and therefore wanting wisdom to evade his cunning framed arguments, is baffled by him and overthrown.

(3.) The enticing nature of the tempter's baits; as to instance in one case. Oh! how many poor sincere souls, yet guilty of too much curiosity, have been entangled by curiously glorious, and gloriously curious fancies, which were no better than the devilish temptations of that hellish tempter; how many (which is yet strange to think, tho' there is reason to fear it).

say, after their seeming comfortable, really comfortable wandering, walking in thro' ways of truth, have cause to set down their steps, making for every step a sin, and for every sin letteth fall a tear of blood.

(4.) Temptations often prevail, by reason of the strength of corruption, which the tempter works upon; were there no corruptions, there would be few or no temptations; I am sure they should not prevail.

(5.) And lastly, The tempter's prevalency proceeds from the weakness and low estate of the inward-man; sin is never at a higher flood, than when grace is at a low ebb. It is a hard matter, (believe experience) to keep the soul from sinking at such a time. Nothing is so easy, than to thrust one under water, when the depth of the water is more than the height of the man.

Objection. But now to make sure the doctrinal part, I shall lay down some reasons why the people of God are thus attended with temptation, for it is a natural objection against this point. Why will the Lord who is so merciful to his people, suffer them to be thus used and buffeted by temptations?

Answer. I answer in general on God's behalf, that he is never so less tender, as will appear in particular. Thus.

(1.) Because one end seems to be thus, that they might know themselves the better, and see what they are naturally, were it not for temptations, we should not come to know our own corruptions. We see by this what lust is more prevalent in us, according to that in Heb. xii. 1. 'The sin that doth so easily beset us,' and what Satan makes most use against us; we learn by this our own weakness to resist, without assisting grace.

(2.) Again, It is for a saint's exercise; this tempted condition is God's artillery, his school of arms, wherein God brings up his children, trains them and instructs them how to clasp on their helmet of salvation, to put on the breast-plate of righteousness, to hold out the shield of faith, to brandish the sword of

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the Spirit, in a word, how to put on the Lord Jesus Christ, even our whole armour of righteousness.

(3.) That we might know our enemies, that we may be the more watchful, over Satan, sin, and the world.

(4.) That we might long to be at home with our Father; that we might be weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breast of this present world.

Lastly, The Lord doth it to bear down our pride, and keep us humble: we should else be too much lifted up through our continued spiritual prosperity: and thus it was with Paul, 2 Cor. x. 7, 8.

This doctrine may afford us this useful application, by way of, 1. Information. 2. Reprehension. 3. Examination. 4. Consolations. 5. Exhortation.

First, Information, it may inform us. 1. Of the devil's enmity, who is so much the saint's foe, as that he will not let him be quiet. This old serpent that first deceived Adam, and deprived him of paradise; yea, and ever since hath been, and still is very busy to dispossess the saints, if possible, of their spiritual paradise.

2. We may learn hence the remaining seeds of corruption that are in the best of saints; without which (as I noted before) the devil would always tempt in vain.

3. We may perceive what is the saints state here below: it hath indeed many fair pleasant prospects to the Christian's eye (I mean the eye of faith) but the way is a tempted troublesome dangerous way, Acts xiv. 22.

4. It may teach us the wisdom of God, and his great care of the saints, who make use of Satan's enmity, and our corruptions to do us good withal.

Secondly, Reprehension, and thus it reproves those who think it an easy matter, a thing of nothing to be a Christian.

(2.) It reproves such who censure poor tempted afflicted ones. (1.) Under their temptations, though not overcome. (2.) When fallen; and Oh, how

rash, uncharitable, and unchristian like are they.

(3.) It is an occasion of rebuke to those who think it strange that either themselves, or others should be tempted.

Thirdly, Examination, this is in these particulars,

(1.) To examine who is the tempter, according to Page 266, 267, 268, 269, 270, 271, 272.

(2.) To examine the temptation. See page 272, 274, 275.

(3.) To examine the frame of our heart under it, whether we carry it lightly, and indifferently, or are grieved or troubled for them.

Fourthly, Consolation; from these arguments.

Arg. 1. A tempted condition is frequent among the saints; yea, and so usual, that I may confidently question, whether he were ever truly a saint, that is not tempted? And for this assertion, there is a cloud of witnesses in scripture, one in 1 Cor. xiii.

Arg. 2. God hath promised assistance to tempted ones, 2 Cor. xii. 9. My grace is sufficient for thee, &c. God is as able to help, as thou canst be weak, when thou art tempted.

Arg. 3. Christ was tempted, that he might know how to succour those that are tempted, Heb. ii. 18. read from verse 9.

Arg. 4. It is a blessing, or a blessed thing to endure temptations, James i. 12. and v. 11.

Arg. 5. The saints temptations are needful for them, 1 Pet. i. 6. Thou canst not be without them.

Arg. 6. They are but the trials of faith, 1 Pet. i. 7. James i. 3, 4. And should we be grieved that our faith is proved? The gold smith rather useth, than avoideth the fire, for the trying of his gold; neither is the gold diminished, but rather its worth more fully known, when the dross is gone. This is the trial that doth try the faith of every child of God.

Arg. 7. God hath promised the burden shall not be too great for us to bear, 1 Cor. xiii. 14. This is ground of comfort, to know we shall not be overwhelmed by the temptation.

Arg.

Arg. 8. A great comfort it is, that God thinks upon us at such a time; we are sure of this, both because of the temptations, and also the support we have under them.

Arg. 9. It is a great sign of God's love, else he would never take care to try and purge us.

Arg. 10. Many times it goes before some signal providence: and we may take it as a great sign, that God is about to do some great thing for us, or we must be employed in some great work for him: thus he did with Israel, proved them forty years, before he gave them to possess the land.

Arg. 11. Be not disconsolate, strong and long enduring temptations, when meeting with resistance, are a strong argument of a strong faith, and especially of the growth and increase of faith. But to be brief.

Arg. 12. Consider the saints condition here is not their best state: there is heaven to come yet, where there is no tempter.

Arg. 13. We have not been so much, nor so often tempted, as we ourselves have tempted God.

Arg. 14. The devil's temptations though they be evils, yet are not the saints evils, unless they are overcome by them.

Arg. 15. It is a great sign of God's love, so of Satan's hatred, and so consequently a token that thou art none of his, but God's, else he would never rage thus: the devil makes no such ado with wicked ones.

Arg. 16. As our temptations now abound, so shall our joy, in times, much more abound.

Many arguments for consolation I might make use of, and much more enlargements upon these; all which for brevity's sake I here omit.

Fifthly, For Exhortations, 1. Beware how you tempt the devil to tempt you, how you give occasion by indulging any sin or lust. 2. When you are tempted, be not cowardly, but courageous, do not flee, but resist, James iv. 7. Beware of pride, when delivered out of temptation, this may make us fall into a dangerous relapse.

Having

Having finished this point, I proceed to show in the next observation, how we may avoid the evil of temptations.

Doct. The only way to avoid the evil of temptation, is to watch and pray.

In the handling of this doctrine, we may consider these four things. 1. What it is to watch. 2. What it is to pray. 3. The proof of this point. 4. How watching and praying may conduce to our escape from the evil of temptation.

Concerning the duty of watching, consider, First, What watching implies. Secondly, How we may do to watch.

First, Watching implies, 1. A continual walking like the spouse, Cant. v. 2. 2. A diligent hearkning: thus the watchmen, Isa. xxi. 7. 3. A constant readiness: Peter exhorts under a metaphorical expression, 1 Pet. i. 15. Gird your loins, that is, to be ready. It is taken from the Jews long garments which they used to gird up about them, that they might run with less interruption.

Secondly, How we may do to watch; I shall but name the particulars. 1. Let the heart be continually fixed upon God. Oh, how will this cool our affections to the world, and kindle the fire of love to God!

2. Let the eye be much upon self; this will keep us low in spirit, 'And blessed is the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven,' Matth. v. 3.

3. Beware of drowsiness: we should shake it off by prayer.

4. Be well resolved in spirit, mind that of the prophet, 1 Kings xviii. 21.

5. Be sure all be well with us; be sure the foundation be Christ, let there be no sins unrepented of, that will breed sorrow; harbour no enemy, nor lust in thy soul, Prov. xx. 9.

6. Trust not thine (no not thine own) heart, but regulate it by the word of God; 'For the heart is deceitful, Jer. xvii. 9. And he is a fool that trusts in his heart,' Prov. xxviii. 16.

7. Keep

7. Keep therefore a narrow eye to the heart, Prov. iv. 23.

8. Call thine heart often to a strict account. Psal. iv. 5. Examine diligently, What have I done? What do I know? What am I about to do?

9. And if there be any thing out of order, tarry not, but repair it suddenly, lay sin upon Christ, and then mourn over it.

10. Let nothing be suggested, and presently entertained, but first brought to trial: see if it be the will of God, if it be for his glory; if it be not for his glory, it is not his will.

11. Be sure to keep conscience clear: a little filth there stops all the channel: it is dangerous to know of one sin, and not to confess it, much more dangerous to know thy sin, and wink at it.

12. For this end keep an open ear to conscience, let it speak.

13. Let the mouth be stopped to sin, and the hands tied from wickedness. David prays, That a watch may be set to the door of his lips: and certainly it is very needful.

14. Let the whole armour of God be on, Eph. vi. 10, to the 18.

Thus much concerning watching; now concerning prayer. Consider, 1. What prayer is. 2. The several kinds of prayer. 3. The manner how we are to pray.

1. Prayer is the outward enlargement of the soul's inward breathings: it is a work of God's Spirit, and so flows out of the spirit and heart of man, Zech. xii. 10. Rom. viii. 26, 27. Jude ver. 20. 1 Cor. xiv. 19. Psalm lxii. 8. and ii. 4. Prayer is a talking of the heart and soul with God, and of such a heart as is prepared by God, Jer. xxix. 3. Psalm xxvii. 1. and x. 17.

2. And thus it is either mental, in the heart only, Exod. xiv. 15. 1 Sam. i. 3. Or else vocal, uttered by voice, Psalm lxxvii. 1. Again there is secret prayer when we pray alone. That Daniel did when he set-
teeth

reth up his windows, Dan. vi. 10, 11. Or more public, when we pray with others in the family, congregations, &c. And here let some preparatives to prayer be added. First, Pray that you may pray; lift up your eyes and your hearts to God, when about to pray: thus did David, Psal. cxli. 1, 2. Secondly, Meditate. 1. On God's sufficiency, and especially his promiser, Psal. l. 15. Matth. viii. 7. This will make you confident in prayer.

3. On thine own wants and vileness, that thou mayest be fervent, so did Ezra, Chap. ix. 6, 7.

4. On the great majesty of God, to beget humility, and lowliness of spirit, Eccl. v. 2. Gen. xxxiii. 9, 10.

5. On the relation thou standest unto God, by Christ as the Father.

Thirdly, Now, how are we to pray? 1. We must pray what we understand, and understand what we pray, 1 Cor. xiv. 15.

2. We must pray in the holy Spirit, be directed by it. Jude verse 20. Rom. viii. 28.

3. In the name and mediation of Christ, that is, relying on the merits of his, not on our righteousness, John xvi. 13, 14. John xxi. 23.

4. With faith believingly, that God will give us what is good for us, James i. 6, 7.

5. With humility and acknowledgement of our own unworthiness, Psalm x. 17.

6. With an heart willing to be cleansed by the blood of Christ, James iv. 6. From every pollution, Heb. x. 12. Psalm lxxvi. 18.

7. With love to the saints, Matth. vi. 14, 15.

8. With zeal and fervency, James v. 16.

9. Do not give off; but wrestle with God for the blessing, with an unwearied constancy, Luke xviii. 1, to the 9. Matth. xv.

10. Pray for heavenly things first, and most seek earthly things in the second place: the one absolutely, and the other conditionally, Matth. vi. 7.

11. Pray for things agreeable to the will of God, 1 John v. 14.

12. Take

12. Take heed ye love not long prayers, and think to be heard because they are long, Matth. vi. 33.

Now I come to the proof of this point, that the only way to avoid the evil of temptation, is, to watch and pray. This is clearly stated in the text, so that it scarce needs more confirmation: only take that of Paul, when buffeted with temptations. For this (saith he) 'I besought the Lord thrice,' 2 Cor. xii. 8. There is great need of watching and prayer.

1. Before we fall into temptation.

2. When we are under temptation, how watching and prayer conduceth to the anticipating the assaults of Satan, frustrating the temptation.

First of all, for watching.

1. It sets us in a readiness for an assault, when we are expecting we shall not be taken unprovided.

2. It adds resolution, to stand out against Satan; we know suddenness strikes us into fear, when expectation and deliberation increaseth courage.

3. It is a counter-mine to all Satan's stratagems, it will deceive the deceiver, to find us watching with spiritual diligence; when he would have us sleeping in carnal security.

4. Watching secures us from such evil that might be added, in case we were drawn to that temptation; for security is no better than a temptation, especially at such a time.

Secondly, For prayer: this conduceth to avoid the evil of temptation, because it fetcheth help from God in whom is all our strength; for it is God's promise, 'Call upon me in the day of trouble, I will deliver thee and thou shalt glorify me,' Psal. l. 15. It is so great comfort under temptation, to have God to go to, especially one that is able and willing to help.

This may instruct us: Then there is great need of watching. It is certainly an universal necessary duty for all saints, at whatever time, to watch. So saith Christ our Saviour. 'What I say unto you, I say unto all, watch,' Mark xiii. 37. The great end of this duty, is the coming of the Lord Jesus. 'Watch, saith Christ,

Christ, for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come, Matth. xxiv. 42. 44. There are three considerations, may move us to watch. 1. Let us consider whom we offend and dishonour by our neglect in watching, no less than God. And would we rather than want a nap of security, displease our God? Is God no more worth to us than so? Let us seriously weigh, how great an offence, how great a dishonour to God our unwatchfulness is, this will engage us to watch.

2. Let us consider whom we gratify and advantage by our neglects, no less an enemy than Satan, the enemy of our souls: and shall we pleasure our grand adversary? Oh, no; then let us watch.

3. Whom we displease, it is ourselves; and will we that our souls should be losers! If not, let us be much, yea, always upon our watch.

But, Secondly, It may inform us of the necessity of prayer at all times, Pray without ceasing, 1 Thes. v. 17. So David would pray and cry aloud, at evening at morning, and at noon, Psalm lv. 17. And Daniel would pray thrice a day, Dan. vi. 10. It is the duty of all, and every saint, in all conditions, in spiritual things. 1. Pray for grace that God would give and increase it either in thyself or others. 2. Pray against sin, against the guilt of sin, against the power of sin, 3. Pray against Satan's temptations.

1. Against the occasion of the temptation, (that if it be possible) thou mayest shun and escape the very appearance of it.

2. That the strength of corruption within, and the power of temptation without, may not be so prevalent as to lead thee captive to evil.

3. Pray that the entrance into the temptation may be no disadvantage to thy grace, and that the escape out may be no impeachment to, but rather for the advancement of God's glory.

1. Pray for nothing, but what thou standest in need of; unnecessary things are not to be the subject of our petitions: and therefore our Saviour bids us pray

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for our daily bread: and so that good man Augur, Give me neither poverty nor riches, Prov. xxx. 7, 8, 9. 2. Even in these things pray with submission to the will of God. 3. If watching and prayer be the mean to escape the evil of temptation, then the strength of the saints is not sufficient? No, we must go to God for deliverance. 4. If we do not watch and pray, all other means are irregular at least, if not sin.

Thus much for information. Now for exhortation.

1. Watch and pray continually, but especially at a time of temptation. 2. Be serious in watching and prayer; some do it between hot and cold, or by fits, or much lightness of spirit: But, saith the Apostle, * Be sober, and watch unto prayer. * Sobriety and seriousness becomes those that call upon God.

The End of the third Sermon.

CONSIDERATIONS of DEATH,

Containing some few Reasons why men fear it: And opposite Reasons by way of Answer, why they should not fear it.

OBJECTION 1. First, Because thereby we are deprived of the exercise of all our senses, so that whatever delight, either our taste, smell, hearing, sight, feeling, hath afforded us, we shall enjoy the same no more, whilst (perhaps) many generations after us, shall have the fruition thereof.

Answer 1. First, As the exercise of our senses afford opportunity or delight, so are they capable of annoying and grieving us: as the taste by bitterness, and sharpness, &c. The smell by noisom pollution, corruption, &c. The hearing by terrible and hideous noise, and evil tidings; the sight, by lothsome affrighting and miserable appearances; the feeling by tedious pains, &c.

Again, we have had the benefit of surviving former
generations

generations, who were liable to what we are, and so shall be those who shall succeed us.

Object. 2. But that which aggravates the evil thereof is, the man's being cut off in the flower or strength of his age; whereto if he lived the common way of men, he should the more contentedly leave this life.

Ans. Why. What is man? Is he not a flower, and as grass, and the like? and are they not cut off in their best state? And may not God when he walketh in, or vieweth the garden of human flowers, have as much liberty to crop them, as men have of theirs? surely, yea, for all are his.

Secondly, And tho' God permit some men to live as long as an ordinary course of nature, or be it seventy years, (which is judged the most common) or more; yet he hath not promised them so long life.

Thirdly, And though so many live long, yet considering the wars, and plagues, and other diseases among men, it is not without reason thought, there are many more that die who hath not lived according to the course of nature.

Fourthly, As we conclude, that no person better or so well as the gardner, or such as sowed, planted, dressed, and frequently practised about the flowers, and plants knows when, and for what reason, to gather and pluck up; so no person knoweth better nor so well, as God knows when to cut, or pluck up what he hath planted in the world, who doth all his actions upon good and weighty reasons, even greater and better than any gardener, or other person hath, for what he hath in his concernment.

Object. 3. In death a man becomes a lothsome spectacle to all beholders, insomuch that the sight and smell of the survivors, find not more noisome offence from, and account not more vilely of the most lothsome creature in this world, than of a dead and rotten corpse of mankind, and is not that very grievous to become from a delightful companion, an abhorrence of all people.

Ans.

Ans. 1. True, being a dead man becomes a lothsome spectacle to all beholders; and do not many diseases, to which a man is incident in his life, effect that same in beholders.

2. Though man do become by death what is suggested, yet hath he not sense thereof, and in that is the proverb verified, 'What the eye sees not, the heart rues not,' for a look on man in that case, (as we may) as a dead lump of corruption, and what a misery can we apply thereto? Who looks on a dunghill, or a jakes, and saith, alas! for its misery? The same feels not, and knows not any: So that altho' the thoughts of such a condition by death, grieves us whilst living; yet in that condition itself we shall be free from such grief.

Again, Consider that we are but earth before we had life: and being dead, we return to our first estate; and tho' withal we become for a season more impure and corrupt, than barely earth, yet in-time we shall become very dust, when the putrefaction is consumed; and in that sense but especially in a more excellent, will that saying be fulfilled, to wit, 'Corruption shall put on incorruption.'

Object. 4. Death deprives man of his society, with whom he had sweet converse.

Ans. True, but it is in order, if he dies in God's favour, he enjoys in due season, better society than men on earth have.

2. Besides as thou loses thy friend on earth, so thou art rid of thy enemies there too.

Object. 5. Tho' death may make way for better society than we have been used to here, yet we know when it shall be; the body not being to receive new life till the general resurrection, which may be very long delayed?

Ans. Suppose it be so, as the most of Christians believe, that the best part of man receives glory and happiness immediately after death; yet from the time of death to the general resurrection, at which time all knowing Christians believe the reward of the righteous

reous will not fail, the space betwixt death and it is but one day: and he who by means of an apoplexy, or like occasion, sleeps many days and nights without waking, cannot esteem of the time he hath slept, answerable to the measure thereof, but it may be to him as one day or night; And in this sense, may death be reckoned, as usually it is in holy scriptures, a sleep.

Object. 6. Suppose a man should die by the hand of a cruel man slayer, who delights in torturing, and destroying the body of man, as hath been seen, would not the conceit of one so cruel, coming to act his mind upon a person, make the thought of such a death more terrible, when therein a man is no more to be regarded than a dog or the vilest creature?

Answer 1. Yea, but do not many by reason of wounds and grangrened members in their life for preserving the body, limbs, or members, endure a great pain, and tremble as much at the sight of the surgeon when he comes to do his office on them, as a man doth at the sight of his executioner to do his? And consider that all that is commonly done at such a death caused less pain for the party, than some do suffer by cutting off one limb, in curing some one wound or disease.

2. Again, consider that the more of torments a man endures in this life, whether at death, or otherwise, the less he is like to suffer after this life, and the more blessing he is likely then to enjoy, if he be a good or worthy man suffering here as a child of God, and not as a reprobate, Rev. xviii. 7. Chap. xx. verses 4, 5, 6.

Object. 7. But in our present state we have being, life, sense and reason; and in death we shall have at the most only, being; and is not that very grievous to consider, that we shall be reduced to no better a condition, than a piece of earth or stone.

Ans. It is true, that this consideration thereof is very grievous in itself, but yet whilst men have reason as well as being, life and sense, let him use it to

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consider also that he hath no more cause to complain than for a piece of earth he now treads on, if it should please God, as at the first, to create thereof a man like himself, and shortly reduce it to its former state: so thus it is now with mankind in general.

Object. 8. It is confest, that there is a proverb (for one pleasure, a thousand dolours) but it seems no better than a flourish of learned men, to colour over a bad matter, for altho' the miseries of a man in this life are not many, yet if the benefits therein do not surmount those miseries, it is likely that men would not so much desire to continue therein, as now they do; and therefore who would not fear death?

Ans. 1. Suppose it be granted that the proverb is only a flourish, and that the benefits in this life do surmount the miseries thereof, yet no man is able to say, how long a person in order to be happy should live here to enjoy these benefits: but God he knows, that he hath appointed for men once to die, therefore rest satisfied in his wisdom, for disposing of thy time for death, concluding that the same shall be in its due season.

2. Again, consider that it is God's prerogative over all his creatures, to dispose of them, how, and when he will.

3. Moreover, God hath already set the bounds of thy life, beyond which thou canst not pass, wherefore patiently commit thyself to him in well-doing, and quietly satisfy thyself with his pleasure: making of necessity a virtue: For it is vain for man to strive against the stream, by tormenting himself with that which he cannot avoid; yet this doth not hinder that a man may, yea, ought, to use what lawful means God gives them opportunity of, for saving their lives.

Object. 9. Well tho' it be granted, that these answers which have been urged, have most, if not all of them common reason and experience on their side, yet there remains further grounds to fear death, as well from what the holy scripture, as nature or custom

custom doth evidence, and that in part is this, to wit, death is reckoned the king of terrors, Job xviii. 12. compared with Heb. ii. 15.

Ans. Death is indeed granted to be the king of terrors, but that is in regard of a certain sting that is in it; if that sting be taken away death will not be so terrible as before, yea, it will be rather gain than loss to die; if that sting reach not the party dying.

Object. 10. I confess there may be some comfort in that answer, if one knew how to escape that sting; but that is a thing so difficult, that I greatly fear death; if I were sufficiently provided in that case should have comfort.

Ans. It is true that the difficulty lies even there where it is exprest: but tho' it be so difficult, yea impossible with man, yet it is not so difficult with God, he hath sufficiently provided for man in that case; for he that is King of kings hath subdued the king of terrors, and done what is needful for a man concerning the same: For which purpose see the scriptures, to wit, 1 Cor. xv. 55, 57. John iii. 14, 16, 17, and part of the 18. Rom. vi. 12, and forward to the end of the chapter.

Object. 11. I grant it appears plain enough, that there is through Jesus Christ, victory wrought over that enemy mentioned, and answerable the sting taken away that I feared: I say, taken from some; but it seems not from all, because it is said, the sting of death is sin: so that where the sin is, there is the sting also, and I know myself a sinner, and therefore in danger of that sting.

Ans. Indeed if thou knowest thyself a sinner, and grieveest not for it, but art therewith content, neither repenting of, or reforming from it. I cannot say the sting of death is taken away from thee; but if thou dost truly repent of thy sins, and endeavour with thy heart to forsake sin, the sting of death is taken away from thee; for the scripture tells us, Christ died for sinners, that is to say humble penitent sinners, not for obstinate ones. A notable example whereof

manifested when the Saviour of the world himself was held up; to wit, in that of the two thieves: the one railed on Christ, and was reprov'd; the other humbled himself, he also prayed, and received the answer of salvation.

Object. 12. Indeed the example, methinks, doth tend to prove what you say, but in so considerable a case as this, a man would desire more than one witness.

Ans. Therefore take more, to wit, Prov. viii. 13. Isa. i. from verse 19. Matth. ix. 12. Rom. v. 8. 1 Tim. v. 15.

Some further Grounds whereon a poor Sinner may expect Mercy, through the Merits of JESUS CHRIST.

FIRST. Through a sense of sin, look on the Lord Christ, as those who were stung with the scorpions in the wilderness, did on the serpent.

Next followeth the humbling of the soul, the effects of which is to be seen in the scriptures, to wit, Job xxi. 29. Psalm x. 17. Isa. lv. 15. James iv. 6.

Which humiliation begets a self-examination, by which knowing the holy rules of life, and comparing a man's life to that rule, trying how his case is, he is thereby ready to say, in respect to his misery, as the apostle doth, Rom. vii. 9, 10, 11. He seeth himself a dead man in the sense of the law.

He that works in him a holy sorrow, and that of repentance not to be repented of, to wit, repentance to salvation, 2 Cor. i. 10, 11.

It brings him to see not only that he is a condemned or guilty person, but that he is irrecoverably lost, and must needs perish, without some person as a Mediator or Redeemer, do undertake for his ransom.

son, or bath undertaken it, for that God is infinitely just, and he must have his justice satisfied: and all that poor souls can do, is but to amend their lives for the future, walking more conformable to the righteous law of God than heretofore: but alas! that is no more than what we ought to be for the time to come, it will not satisfy divine justice for the transgressions already done against the law of God, any more than a man's paying another in an ensuing week, month, or year, for all he is engaged for within the space of time, doth satisfy and clear the debt, which became due in time before that week. Neither, indeed, can a man of himself, satisfy for what he shall owe to it, in the remaining part of his life. Now this consideration works the soul into a melting frame, brings him on his knees, to say as the poor publican, Lord have mercy on me a sinner: and as the prodigal humbled, and sees, all his rambling shifts in vain, for yielding him that solid comfort his soul thirsted after, therefore resolves to go home to his Father; and although he may look upon him as enraged against him, (for which the soul knew it was just cause) yet he goes humbling himself to his Father, saying, 'Father, I have sinned, &c. And am no more worthy to be called thy son.' Now observe the success, 'When he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and fell on his neck, and kissed him.' And further entertained him, not as a servant, as he humbly besought (for the humble shall be exalted) but as a son, and rejoiced in him, Luke xv. 18, 19, 20.

The Assyrians also well knew what good this humble application was likely to effect in an Israelitish king, 1 Kings xx. 31, 32. And if meroy be expected from one of those kings, then much more may it be from the supreme, the King of those kings, the Almighty, who hath promised large graces to humble souls.

So Either, at the advice of Mordcai, Chapter iv

5. Made

5. Made good proof of this humble way of addressing for mercy, in a case otherwise desperate: the success whereof was the golden sceptre holden forth with grace, to grant even beyond the petition, tho' she knew not when she went about it, but that she should perish: yet wisely perceiving that she must perish, if she had not so applied, she proceeded.

Thus it was with the lepers, 2 Kings iv. 4. If they went into the city, they should suffer famine, if they stayed where they were, they must die; they therefore would venture for relief among their enemies; being sure they could not be worse than they were, they could but die one way or another: So when the soul is thus brought to see its own misery, and humbleth itself thoroughly; and with all is willing to embrace what means soever, that present so much as possibility of saving it; Then God shews his mercy to refresh it, according to Isa. lvii. 15, 17, &c. 'To revive the spirits of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.' So Psalm li. 15. Ezek. xxxiii. 11, and forward. And Christ comfortably invites such a poor sinner, that is weary and heavy laden with the sense of his sin, he invites him to come and receive rest. And thus the gospel doth in general give encouragement to humble penitent sinners, to expect salvation from the eternal God, the thing before spoken of being taken away.

Thus being truly humbled under the sense of that miserable condition, which sin hath made a man liable to, and being rightly desirous of salvation, that which is required of him, is only to believe that the righteous God, who might have made him eternally miserable, had notwithstanding, through his tender compassions, (his mercy being above all his works) resolved on a way to satisfy his justice, by acquitting the guilty, who was no way able to pay a sufficient ransom for his own redemption, therefore provided a price satisfactory, to redeem poor fallen man from the curse: Concerning which, both the

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the prophets and apostles, hath witnessed, as in Isa. liii. and lv. Chapters, Micah v. 2. Hosea xi. 1. Psalm xxii. Acts i. 8. Chapter x. 41. And more scriptures, that price of salvation, being JESUS CHRIST: Of whom the angels proclaimed about the time of his entrance into the world. 'Glory be to God in the highest, on earth, peace, good-will towards men,' Luke ii. 14. And the evangelist John Chapter iii. 16. declares positively, 'That God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him, should not perish, but have everlasting life.'

This is the term of salvation, to wit, believing on his Son, to be that gift and ransom, which the gospel generally holds forth, to those who would know what they should do to be saved: Withal there must be an obedient conversation, and that universally to all GODES COMMANDMENTS, answerably to a poor soul's ability, so long as life may last.

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